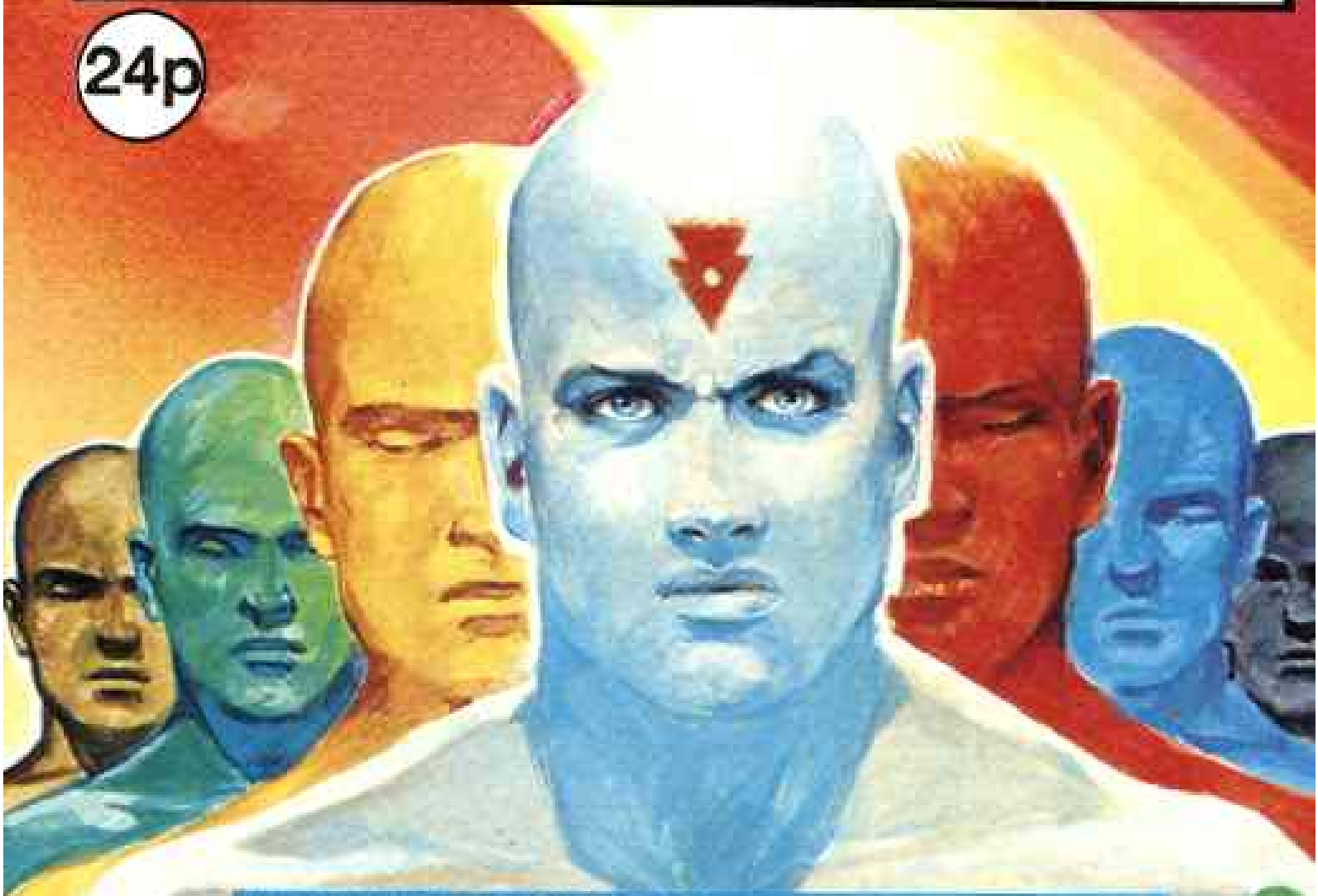
STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 166

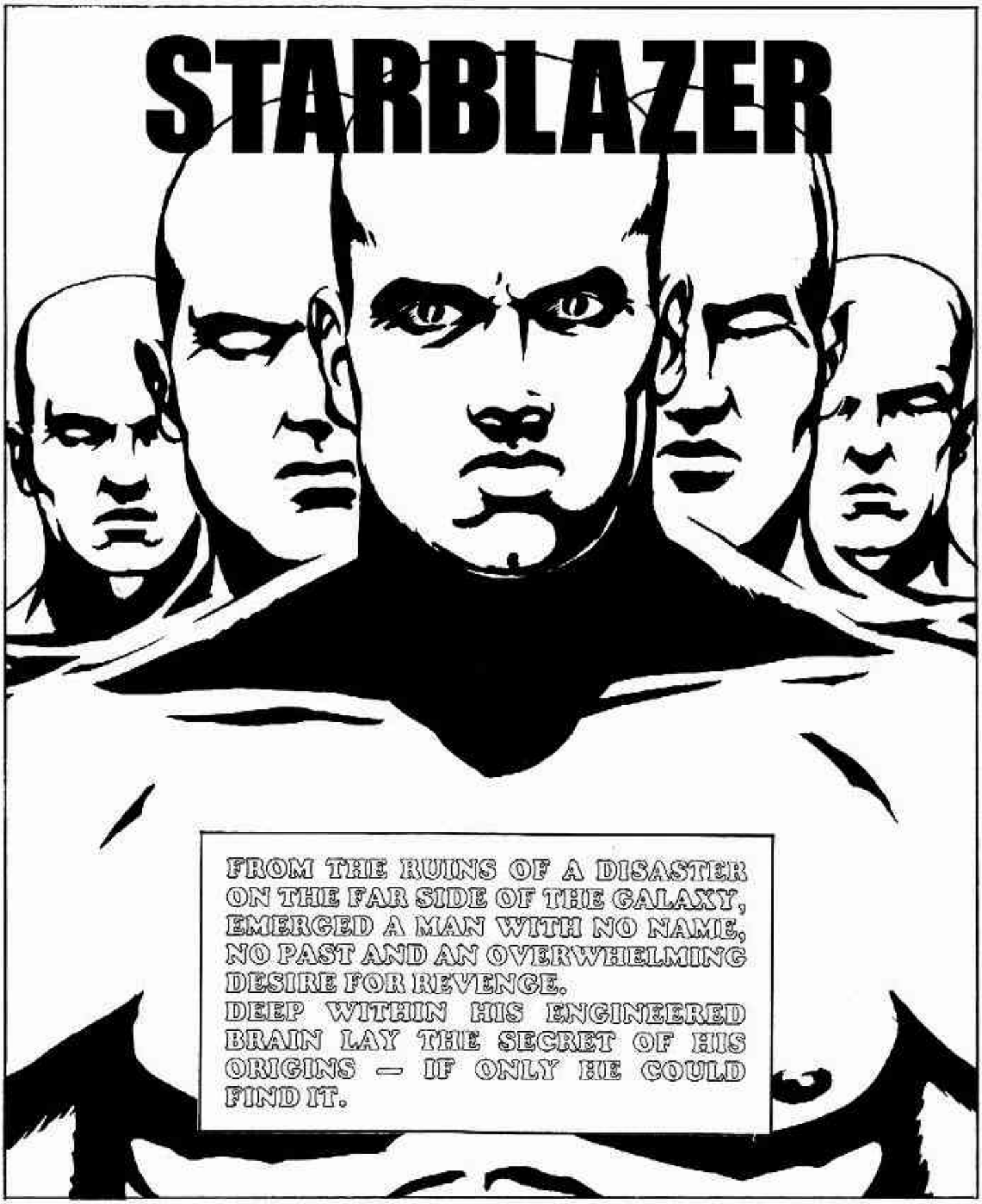
24p



THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF A MASSACRE, HE WAS BIOLOGICALLY REBUILT WITH THE PROPERTIES OF HIS DEAD FRIENDS. HE WAS—

The CLONE RANGER

. . . AND HE WAS BENT ON REVENGE.


STARBLAZER
FROM THE RUINS OF A DISASTER ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE GALAXY, EMERGED A MAN WITH NO NAME, NO PAST AND AN OVERWHELMING DESIRE FOR REVENGE.
DEEP WITHIN HIS ENGINEERED BRAIN LAY THE SECRET OF HIS ORIGINS — IF ONLY HE COULD FIND IT.

THE CLONE RANGER

ONE OF THE RANGERS DECIDED HIS SPECIAL AGILITY WAS NEEDED.
LEAVE THAT WHEEL TO ME!
TROOPER JETT USED HIS JET-PACK AND ARMOUR-PIERCING PHASER TO KNOCK THE WHEEL OFF BALANCE.
THAT SHOULD DESTABILIZE ITS GYROSCOPE.
GET THE FUSION CANNON INTO PLAY! THAT WHEEL WAS ONLY CLEARING THE WAY FOR A TERROR TORTOISE!

BLUEY WAS THE BIG MAN OF THE RANGERS. HIS SPECIAL STRENGTH WAS ALREADY A LEGEND.
BAP
BAP
BAP
I CAN FIRE THE CANNON QUICKER IF I TAKE IT OUT OF ITS TURRET.

NO SOONER HAD THE FUSION CANNON DEFEATED THE TERROR TORTOISE, THAN GLOBULES OF CORROSIVE CHEMICALS FELL FROM THE SKY.
LOOK OUT! THEY'RE USING ACID-HAIL.
DON'T WORRY, I'M FASTER ON THE BUTTON THAN THOSE RAIN-DROPS!
RANGER GREENE HAD SPECIALLY ENHANCED REACTIONS.

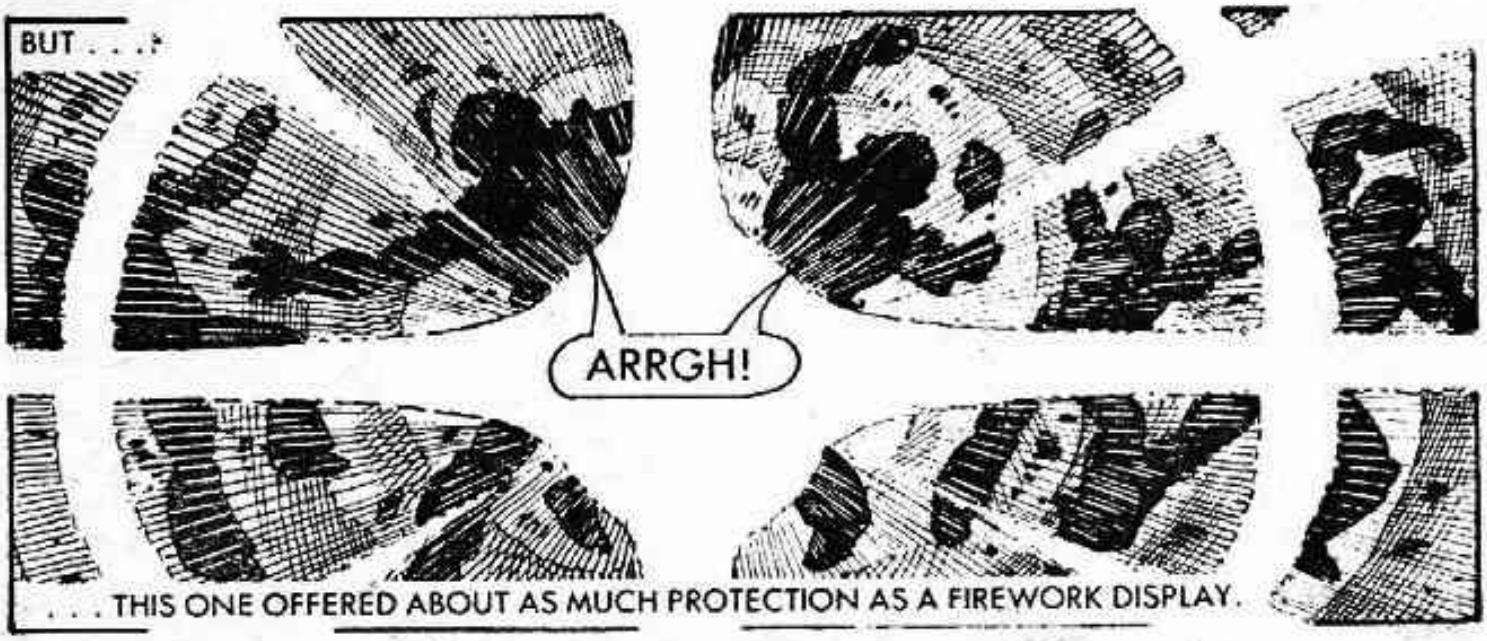
ONCE DEALT WITH, THERE WAS A LULL IN ATTACKS.
SOMEBODY IS DETERMINED TO GET WHAT THIS BASE IS WORKING ON, AMBER.
YES . . . AND WE'LL PROBABLY HAVE TO DIE IN THE ATTEMPT TO STOP THEM.

SUDDENLY, DEADLY SPIKES BURST FROM THE GROUND—
LOOK OUT BELOW, MOLE-MINES!

RANGER REDD WAS A WEAPONS EXPERT AND MOVED VERY QUICKLY TO FLOOD THE MINES WITH A SPRAY OF CORROSIVE ACID FROM HIS SIDE-ARM—
NOT QUICK ENOUGH TO GET THE BETTER OF US.

THE RAIDERS ADVANCED AND BROWNE, THE SIXTH AND LAST RANGER, PREPARED TO USE HIS ELECTRONIC SKILLS TO STOP THEM—
OH, NO! THE CONTAINER'S JAMMED SHUT.
NOT FOR LONG!
BROWNE DECIDED TO PUT THE RANGERS ON THE OFFENSIVE.
IT WAS AMBER WHO HAD SPOKEN, AND HIS LOCK-CRACKING SKILLS HAD THE CONTAINER OPEN IN SECONDS.
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM IT?
THE PROGRAMME TAPE FOR MEASON-CURTAIN COVER.

THE MEASON-CURTAIN WAS A CONCENTRATION OF ENERGY THAT GAVE COMPLETE PROTECTION FROM THE RAIDERS' FUSION BEAMS . . .
RANGERS ADVANCE!

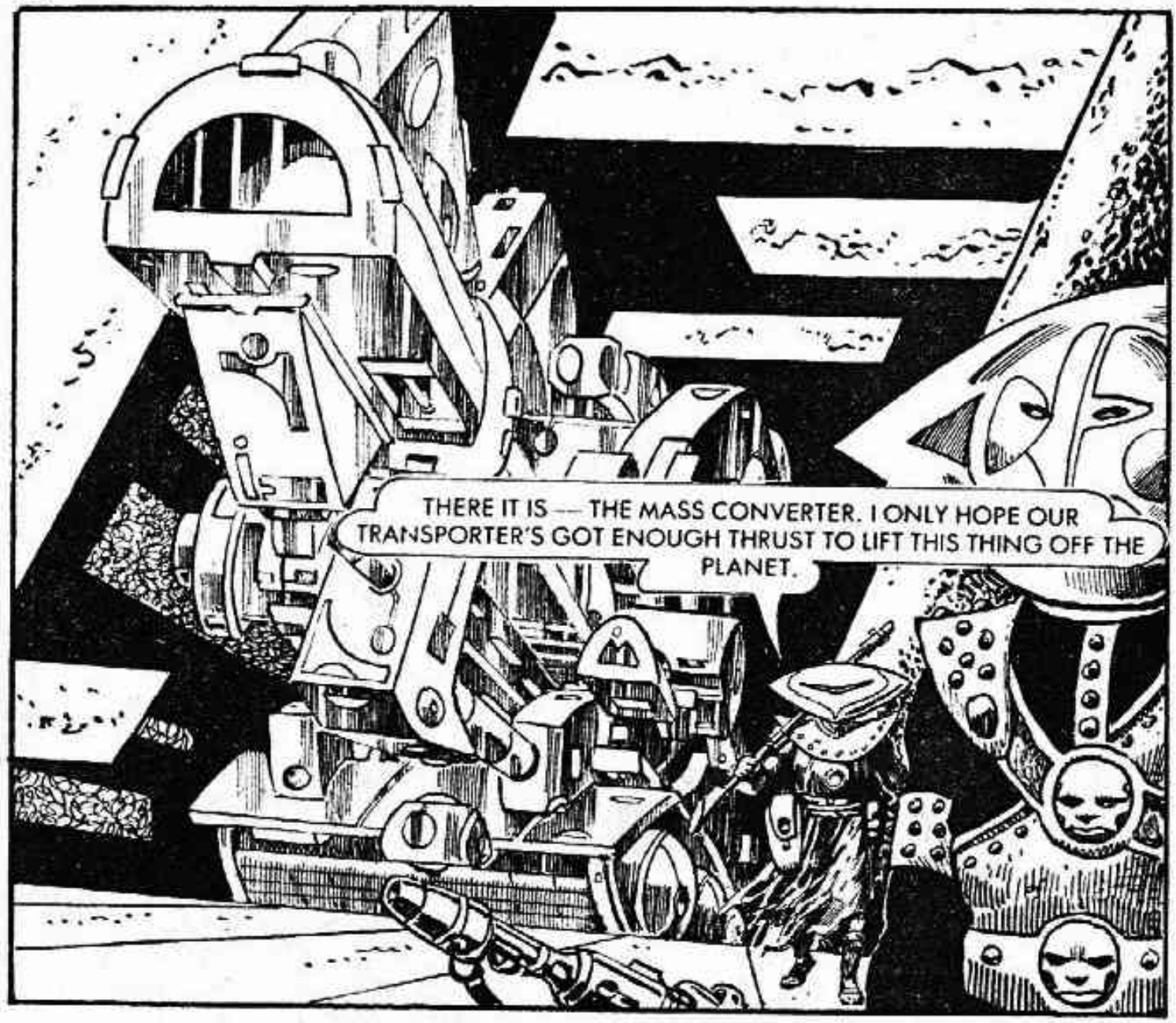

BUT . . .!
ARRGH!
. . . THIS ONE OFFERED ABOUT AS MUCH PROTECTION AS A FIREWORK DISPLAY.

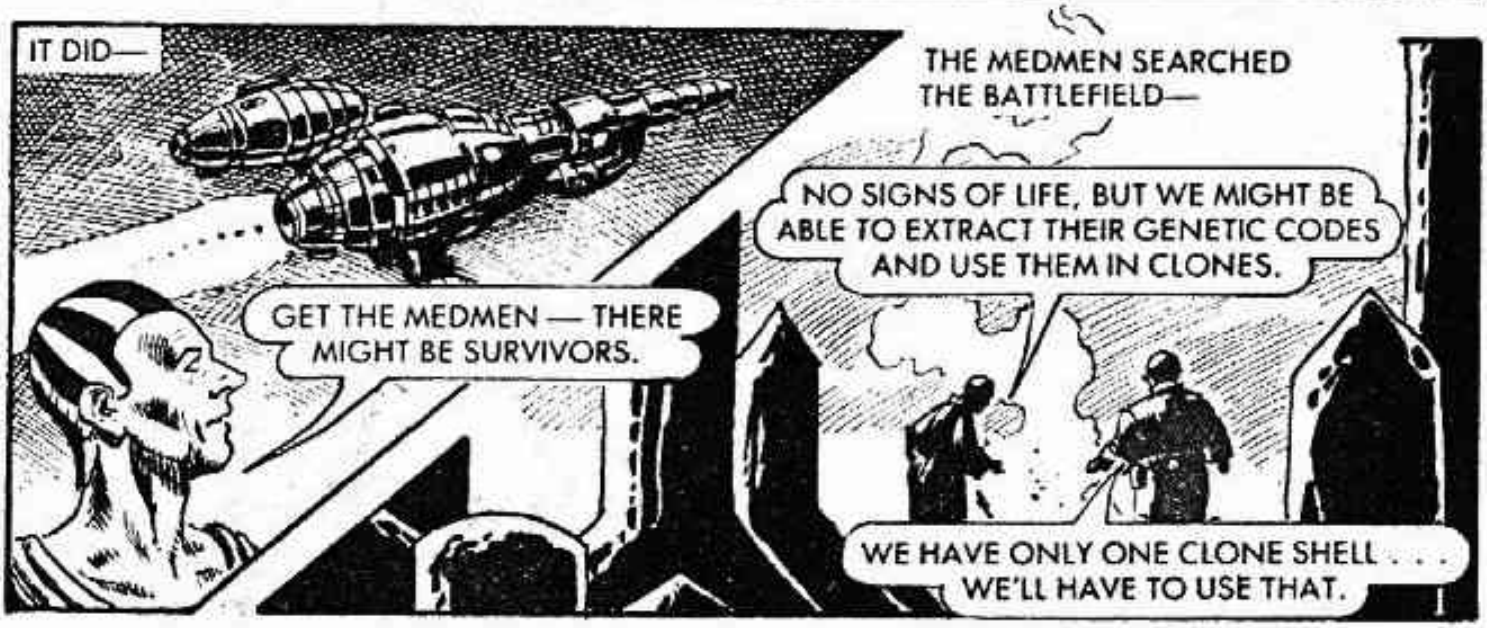
. . . TO THE RAIDERS IT HAD LOOKED LIKE A SUICIDE CHARGE.

IT WAS MADNESS! THEY CHARGED OUR BARRAGE WITHOUT ANY SORT OF COVER.

NEVER MIND THEM, THEY'RE DEAD. LET'S GET WHAT WE CAME FOR FROM THE LABORATORY.

ENTRY WAS SOON GAINED TO THE UNDERGROUND CHAMBER AND THE SCIENTISTS.
ONE FALSE MOVE AND YOU'LL END UP THE SAME WAY AS THE RANGERS.

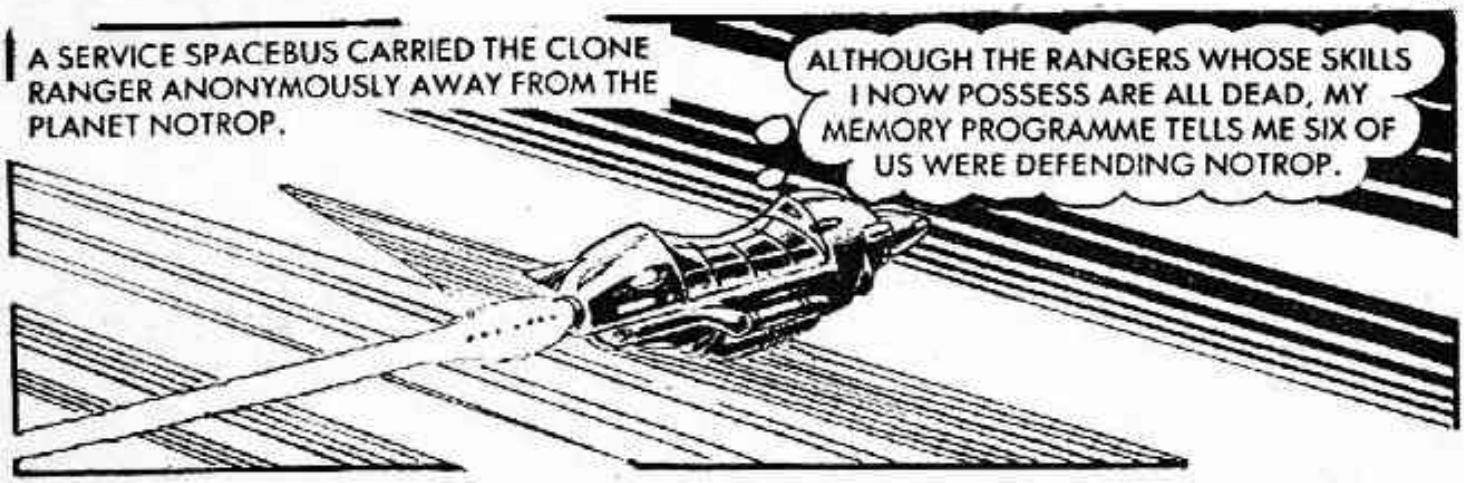

THERE IT IS — THE MASS CONVERTER. I ONLY HOPE OUR TRANSPORTER'S GOT ENOUGH THRUST TO LIFT THIS THING OFF THE PLANET.

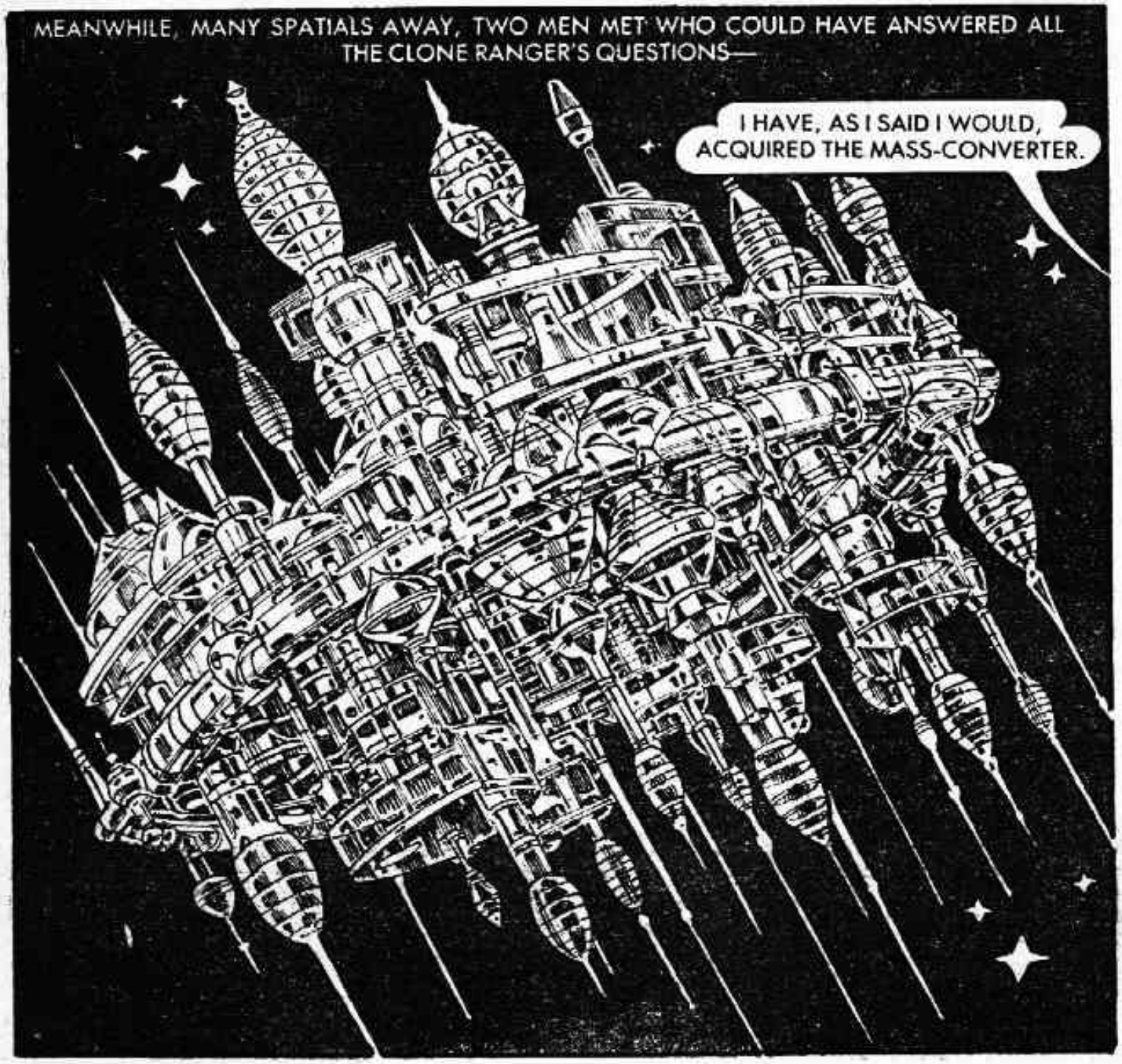

IT DID—
GET THE MEDMEN — THERE MIGHT BE SURVIVORS.
THE MEDMEN SEARCHED THE BATTLEFIELD—
NO SIGNS OF LIFE, BUT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO EXTRACT THEIR GENETIC CODES AND USE THEM IN CLONES.
WE HAVE ONLY ONE CLONE SHELL . . . WE'LL HAVE TO USE THAT.

CLONING WAS A WELL KNOWN, AND OFTEN USED METHOD OF GIVING LIFE TO BODIES RAVAGED BY DISEASE. AS THE RANGERS HAD ENGINEERED CHROMOSOMES, IT WAS POSSIBLE TO EXTRACT THEIR GENETIC CODES IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THEM, BUT NOBODY HAD EVER ATTEMPTED TO CLONE MORE THAN ONE PROPERTY INTO A SINGLE CLONE SHELL.

USING REGENERATIVE PROCESSES, THE SKILLS OF THE DEAD RANGERS WERE BIO-GENETICALLY INSERTED INTO A BODYSHELL, AND—
MY MIND BANKS ARE PROGRAMMED WITH MY MISSION. I AM TO RECOVER THE MASS-CONVERTER.

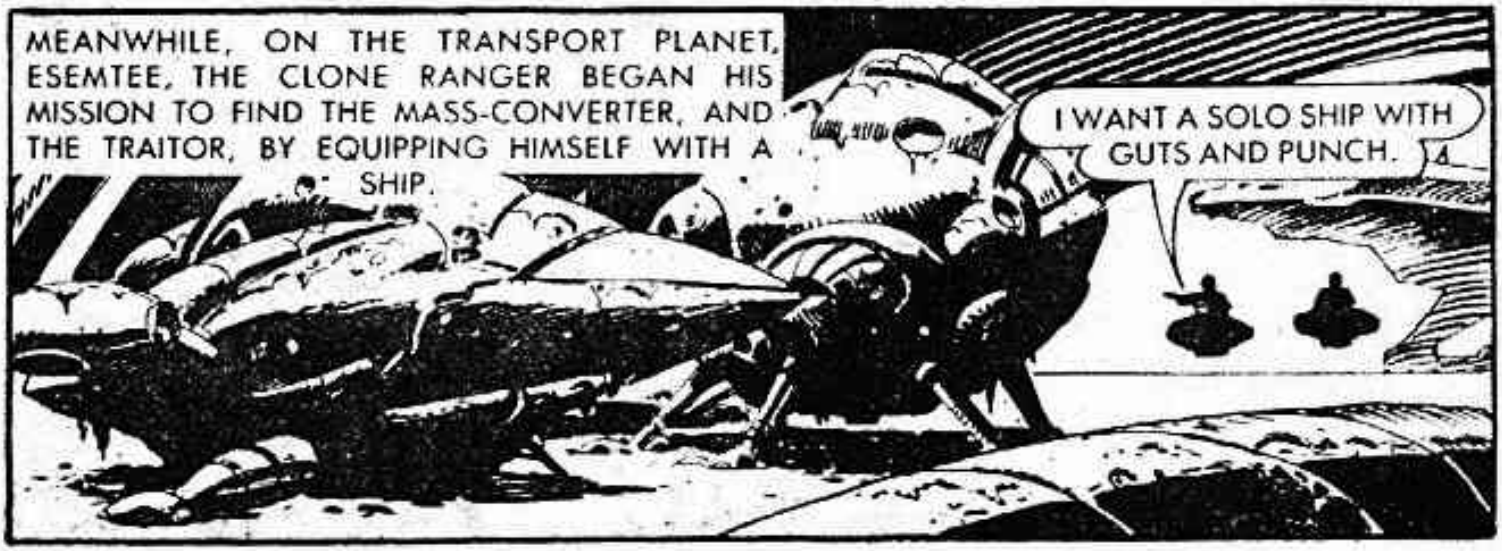
FROM THE MASSACRE OF NOTROP WAS BORN — THE CLONE RANGER. CLONES DIDN'T HAVE A PAST, SO ALL MEMORY HAD TO BE PROGRAMMED.
SOMETHING DOESN'T ADD UP — IF THE RANGERS WERE A SPECIALLY CREATED FIGHTING FORCE WITH EVERY SKILL, IT MEANS THEIR DEFEAT MUST HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY A SUPERIOR FORCE . . . WHICH, FROM REPORTS WAS NOT THE CASE.


A SERVICE SPACEBUS CARRIED THE CLONE RANGER ANONYMOUSLY AWAY FROM THE PLANET NOTROP.
ALTHOUGH THE RANGERS WHOSE SKILLS I NOW POSSESS ARE ALL DEAD, MY MEMORY PROGRAMME TELLS ME SIX OF US WERE DEFENDING NOTROP.


MEANWHILE, MANY SPATIALS AWAY, TWO MEN MET WHO COULD HAVE ANSWERED ALL THE CLONE RANGER'S QUESTIONS—
I HAVE, AS I SAID I WOULD, ACQUIRED THE MASS-CONVERTER.

WE ARE IN BUSINESS, MY FRIEND. YOU CREATE NEW WORLDS WITH YOUR TOY AND I WILL TAKE MONEY FROM PEOPLE WHO WANT NEW WORLDS TO COLONISE.

I LOOK FORWARD TO OUR LONG ASSOCIATION. AS A RANGER I WAS DENIED THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-EXPRESSION AND PERSONAL WEALTH WHICH I NOW HAVE.



THE CLONE RANGER TOLD THE DEALER ONLY AS MUCH AS HE HAD TO—
I'M AFTER RAIDERS WHO STOLE SOME EQUIPMENT FROM THE PLANET NOTROP.

A PIECE OF EQUIPMENT TUMBLED FROM A GANTRY.
LOOK OUT! WE'RE GOING TO BE CRUSHED!

THE CLONE RANGER'S BIO-ENGINEERED REACTIONS TOOK OVER—

HE REACTED, INSTANTLY, WITH AMAZING ATHLETICISM.
CRUMP

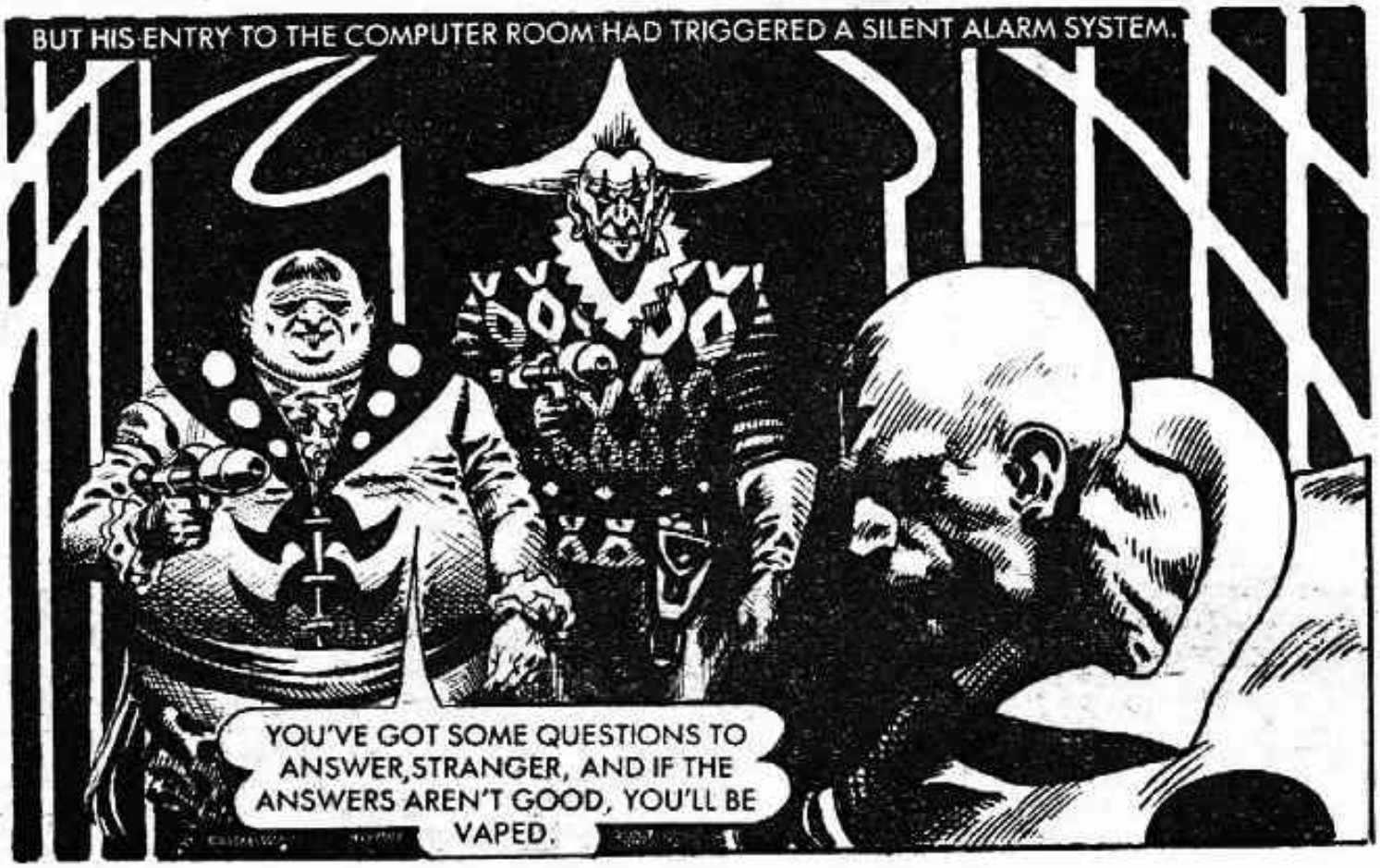
THE CLONED ENHANCED REACTIONS OF GREENE HAD SAVED HIM—
THAT WAS NO ACCIDENT!

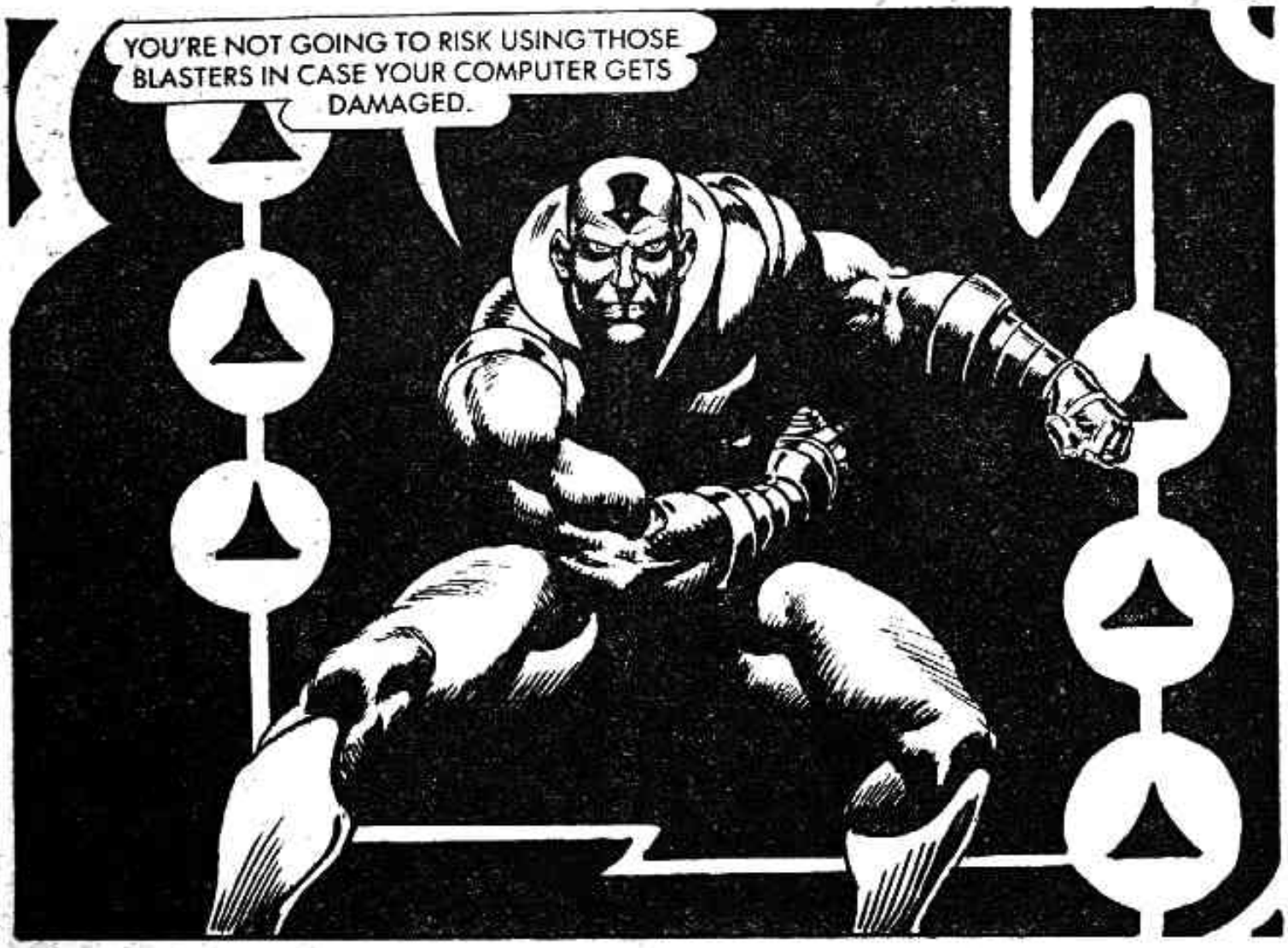
THE ONLY OTHER PERSON IN THE YARD WAS A REP FROM COLONY-STARLINES, LOOKING FOR A CHEAP TRANSPORTER SHIP. THAT LOOKS LIKE HIS SHUTTLE THERE.

HE PURCHASED A SHIP AND FOLLOWED THE ONLY LEAD HE HAD, TO THE PUBLIC OFFICES OF COLONY STARLINES, ON SPACE STATION GOWRIE.
NOT MUCH OF A LEAD! IF WHOEVER OVERHEARD ME IN THE YARD, TRIED TO SILENCE ME BECAUSE I HAD A LEAD, THEN I MIGHT HAVE A CONNECTION.

THE CLONE RANGER LANDED AND POSED AS A WOULD BE COLONIST TO GET A CLOSE LOOK AT COLONY-STARLINES' OPERATION.
COLONY STARLINE
THERE'S NOT A LOT OF INFORMATION HERE! EVERYTHING APPEARS A BIT SECRETIVE.
HE LOOKED INTERESTEDLY AT A PROHIBITED AREA.
ANYTHING THAT'S BEING KEPT SECRET MIGHT BE OF INTEREST TO ME.
AUTHORIZ PERSONN ONLY

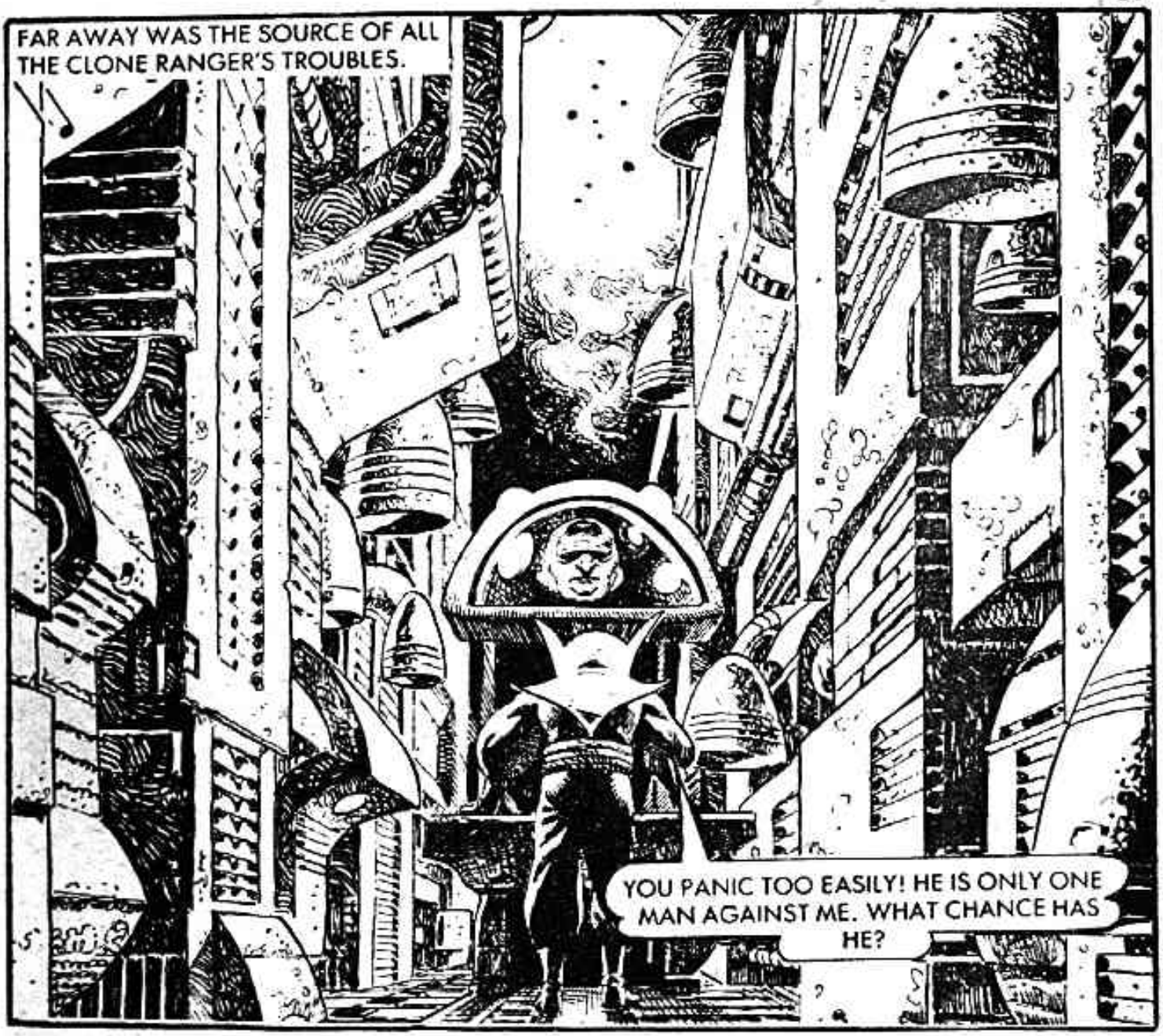
HE USED THE CLONED ABILITY OF BROWNE TO CRACK THE CODES OF THE COLONY-STARLINES COMPUTER.
THE CO-ORDINATES OF THE NEW COLONY ARE ALL HERE.

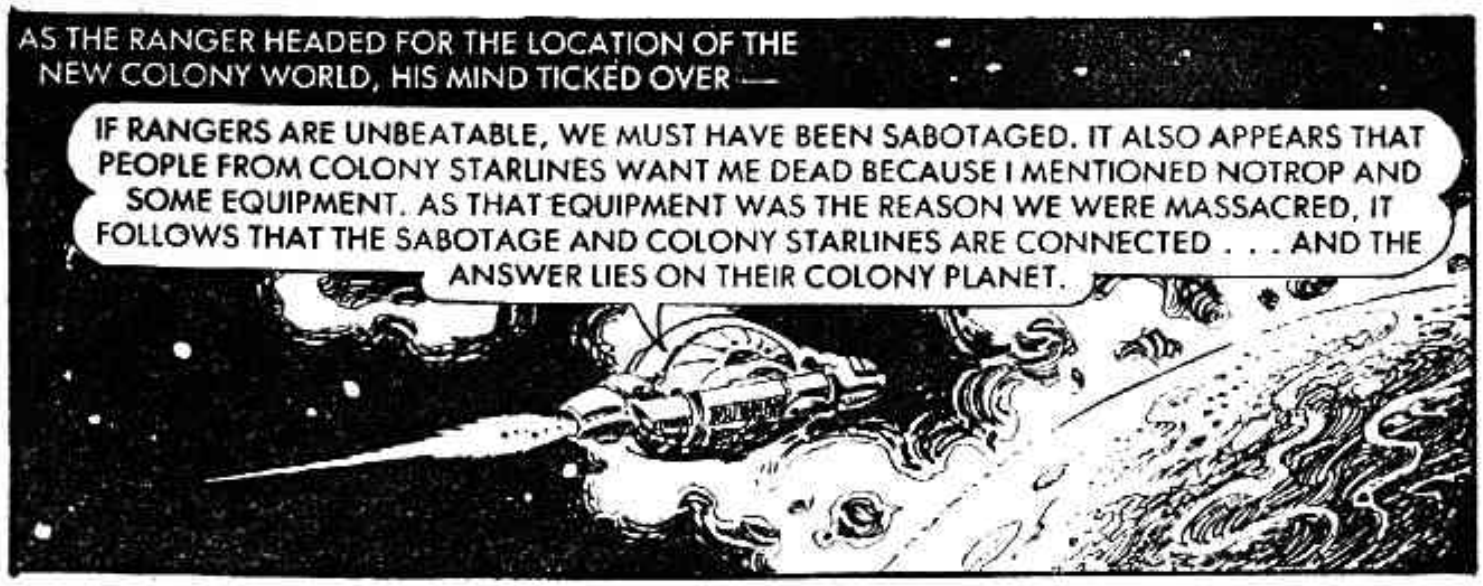

BUT HIS ENTRY TO THE COMPUTER ROOM HAD TRIGGERED A SILENT ALARM SYSTEM.
YOU'VE GOT SOME QUESTIONS TO ANSWER, STRANGER, AND IF THE ANSWERS AREN'T GOOD, YOU'LL BE VAPED.


YOU'RE NOT GOING TO RISK USING THOSE BLASTERS IN CASE YOUR COMPUTER GETS DAMAGED.

HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION AND THE ABILITY TO SELECT AN APPROPRIATE WEAPON, WAS INSTANT —
IF YOU'VE NEVER MET THIS STUFF BEFORE, IT'S CALLED SNUFF-GEL!

THE BIO-ENGINEERED WEAPONRY ABILITIES OF REDD GAVE THE CLONE RANGER THE UPPER HAND. WITH THE CO-ORDINATES OF THE NEW COLONY WORLD IN HIS MIND, HE LEFT SPACE-CITY —


FAR AWAY WAS THE SOURCE OF ALL THE CLONE RANGER'S TROUBLES.
YOU PANIC TOO EASILY! HE IS ONLY ONE MAN AGAINST ME. WHAT CHANCE HAS HE?


AS THE RANGER HEADED FOR THE LOCATION OF THE NEW COLONY WORLD, HIS MIND TICKED OVER —
IF RANGERS ARE UNBEATABLE, WE MUST HAVE BEEN SABOTAGED. IT ALSO APPEARS THAT PEOPLE FROM COLONY STARLINES WANT ME DEAD BECAUSE I MENTIONED NOTROP AND SOME EQUIPMENT. AS THAT EQUIPMENT WAS THE REASON WE WERE MASSACRED, IT FOLLOWS THAT THE SABOTAGE AND COLONY STARLINES ARE CONNECTED . . . AND THE ANSWER LIES ON THEIR COLONY PLANET.

THE SHIP EVENTUALLY REACHED THE NEW COLONY — A NIGHTMARE OF ICE AND COLD.
SO THIS IS WHAT THE BROCHURE CALLED A DEMI-PARADISE FOR COLONISTS.

HE LANDED —
AAWOO
SOME PARADISE! WHAT'S THAT NOISE? DISTANCE NOT TOO FAR!

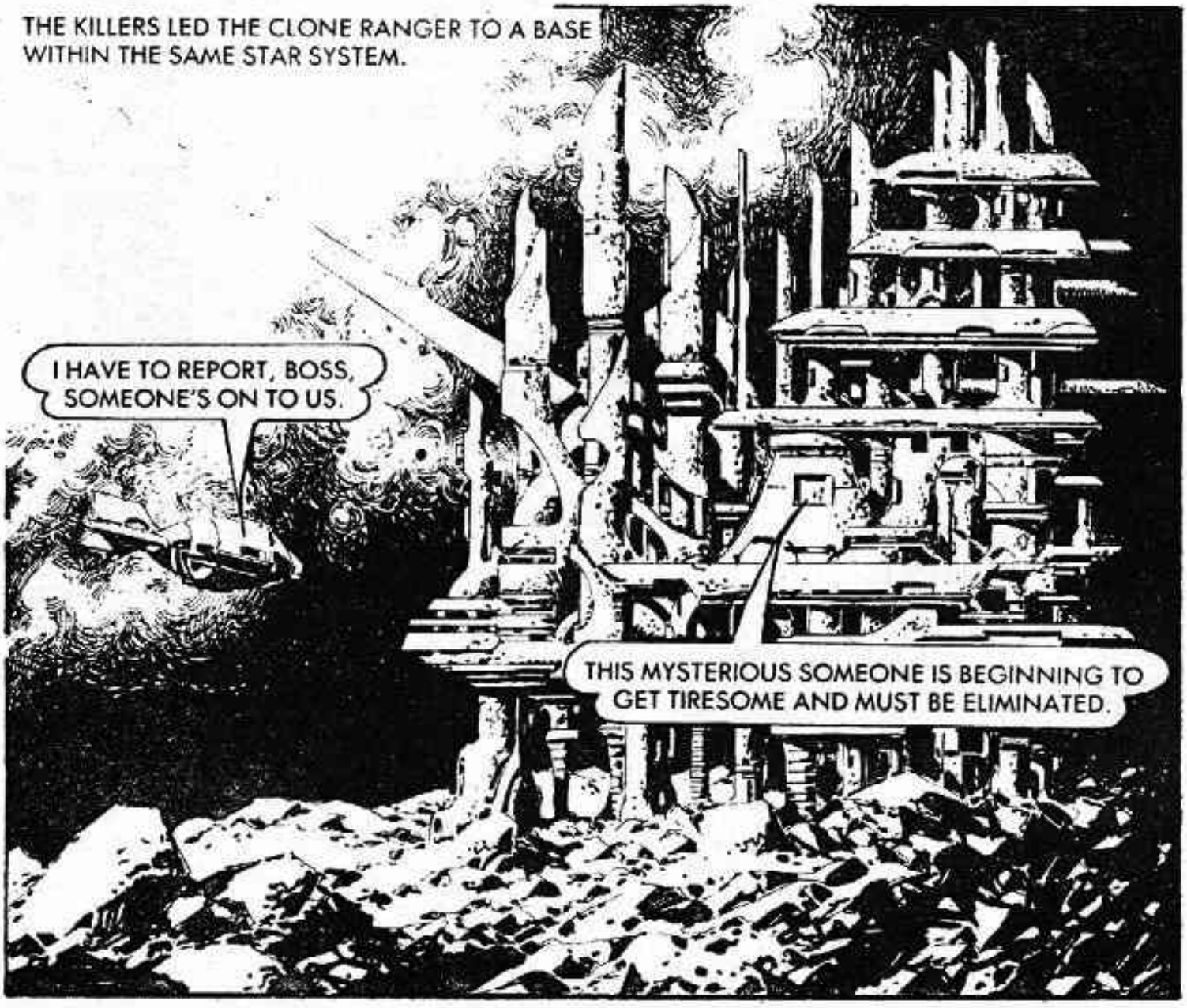
HE INVESTIGATED THE ADJACENT VALLEY —
MY EMPATHY CIRCUITS DETECT GREAT FEAR . . . AND FROM THOSE HAIRY GIANTS.

PARA-GAZ SHOULD STOP THE CARNAGE!

THE GRENADE EXPLODED AND RELEASED A GAS WHICH FROZE THE KILLERS.
COLD . . . WH . . . WHAT . . . ISSSSS . . .

I WONDER IF HE CAN DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN ME AND THE KILLERS.
IT WOULD TAKE A BLIND MAN TO MISS IT! MANY THANKS FOR ASSISTING.
JUPE! IT'S INTELLIGENT!
WHO ARE YOU? WHO ARE THOSE MEN, AND WHY ARE THEY KILLING YOU?
WE ARE A PEOPLE CALLED PAX ULTIMA. WHEN THE BIG BANG, WHICH CREATED THE UNIVERSE OCCURRED, YOU WENT ONE WAY, WE THE OTHER. YOU EVOLVED AND DEVELOPED TECHNOLOGICALLY, BUT DUE TO THIS ICE WE COULDN'T DO MUCH. WE BECAME WHAT YOU'D CALL "ARTY" — POETS, WRITERS, LINGUISTS. AS A RESULT OF OUR MORE ADVANCED MENTAL CAPACITY, OUR FACILITY FOR LEARNING LANGUAGES IS GREAT.

EVEN AS THEY SPOKE THE KILLERS WITHDREW TO CONSIDER THIS NEW OPPOSITION TO THEIR ACTIVITIES.
THEY WANT THIS PLANET WITH NO LIVING CREATURES — WE REFUSE TO MOVE, SO THEY BEGAN TO KILL US.,
SCUM! I'LL FOLLOW THEM — IT APPEARS TO BE LINKED TO MY PROBLEM.


THE KILLERS LED THE CLONE RANGER TO A BASE WITHIN THE SAME STAR SYSTEM.
I HAVE TO REPORT, BOSS, SOMEONE'S ON TO US.
THIS MYSTERIOUS SOMEONE IS BEGINNING TO GET TIRESOME AND MUST BE ELIMINATED.

FROM BEHIND THE SAFETY OF A SENSOR SHROUD, THE CLONE RANGER PLOTTED.
IF I GO IN ON A FREEFALL TRACK WITH ALL SYSTEMS SHUT DOWN, I CAN GET A CLOSE LOOK WITHOUT BEING DETECTED.

IN HIS PRESSURE SUIT, THE CLONE RANGER DRIFTED DOWN TO THE SURFACE —
SO FAR SO GOOD! BUT THEY'RE BOUND TO HAVE SECURITY SCREENS ROUND THEIR OPERATIONS CENTRE.

THE CLONE RANGER CLIMBED ABOARD A SKIP CARRYING BOULDERS —
I'LL TRY GOING IN WITH THE ROCK. THEN NIL GRAVITY SHOULD SAVE ME FROM BEING CRUSHED.
MAYBE THEIR CONTROL WILL LEAD ME TO THE TRAITOR.
HE HAD TO TWIST AND TURN IN THE WEIGHTLESS AREA TO AVOID BEING CRUSHED. AS A RESULT HE LOST HIS BLASTER.
JUPE! THE JAWS OF DEATH!
BUT ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY WAS MAINTAINED ON THE RIG PLATFORM AND CAUSED HIM TO FALL INTO DANGER.

THE CONVEYOR BELTS DRAGGED HIM IN —
IF THESE CLOSE . . .

USING THE CLONED STRENGTH OF BLUEY, THE CLONE RANGER BROKE THE JAWS...
WHERE NOW I WONDER?
...AND FELL TOWARDS THE CRUSHING ROLLERS.

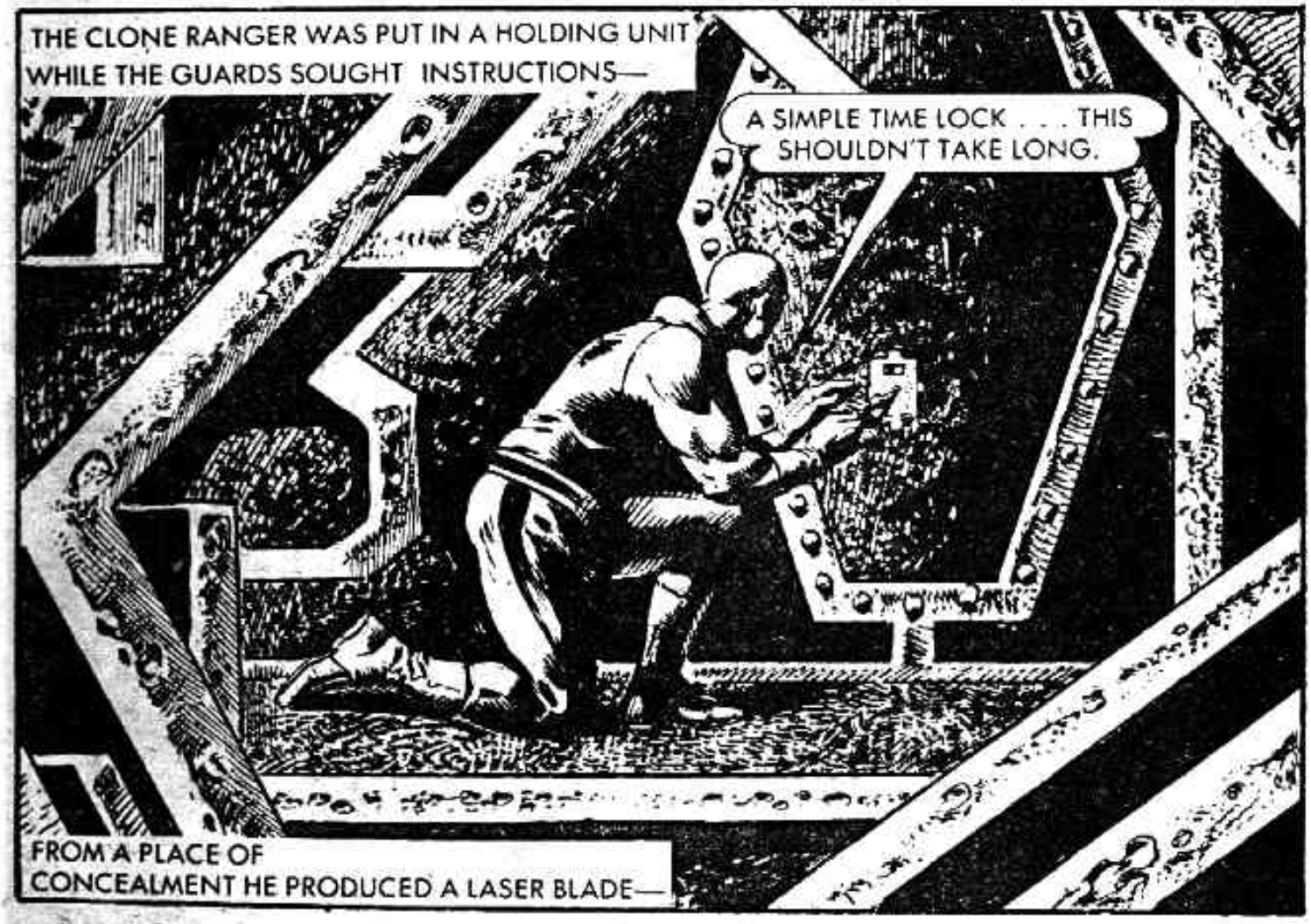
JUPE! I'LL BE BURIED ALIVE.

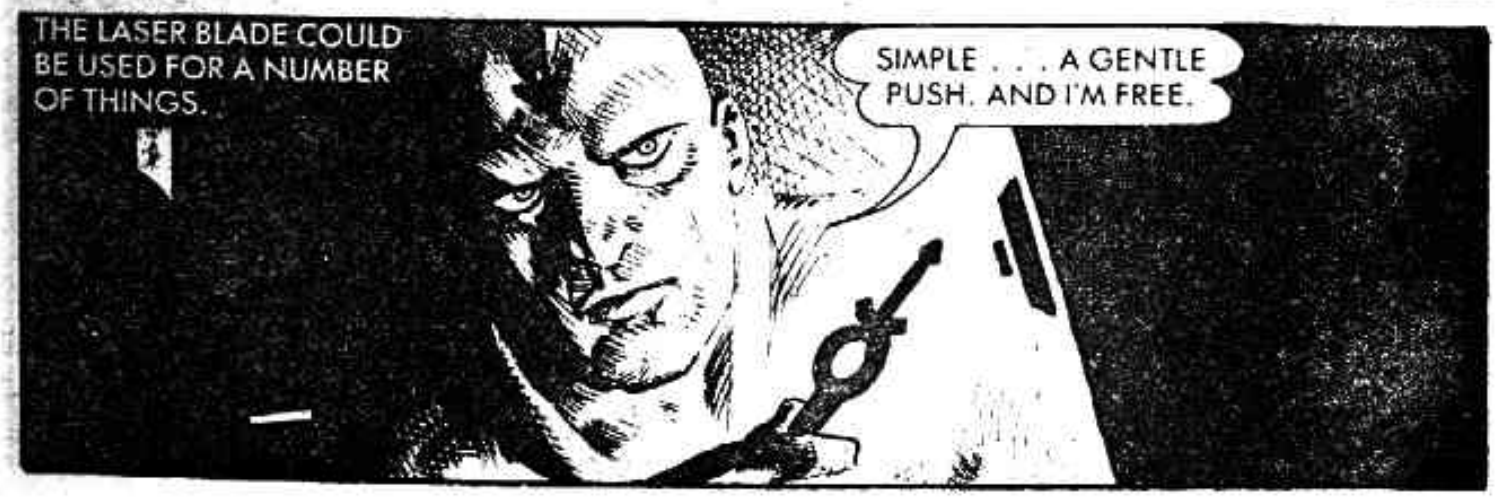
BUT EVEN AS HE SLIPPED TOWARDS SUFFOCATION, HE FIRED A LIFE-LINE—

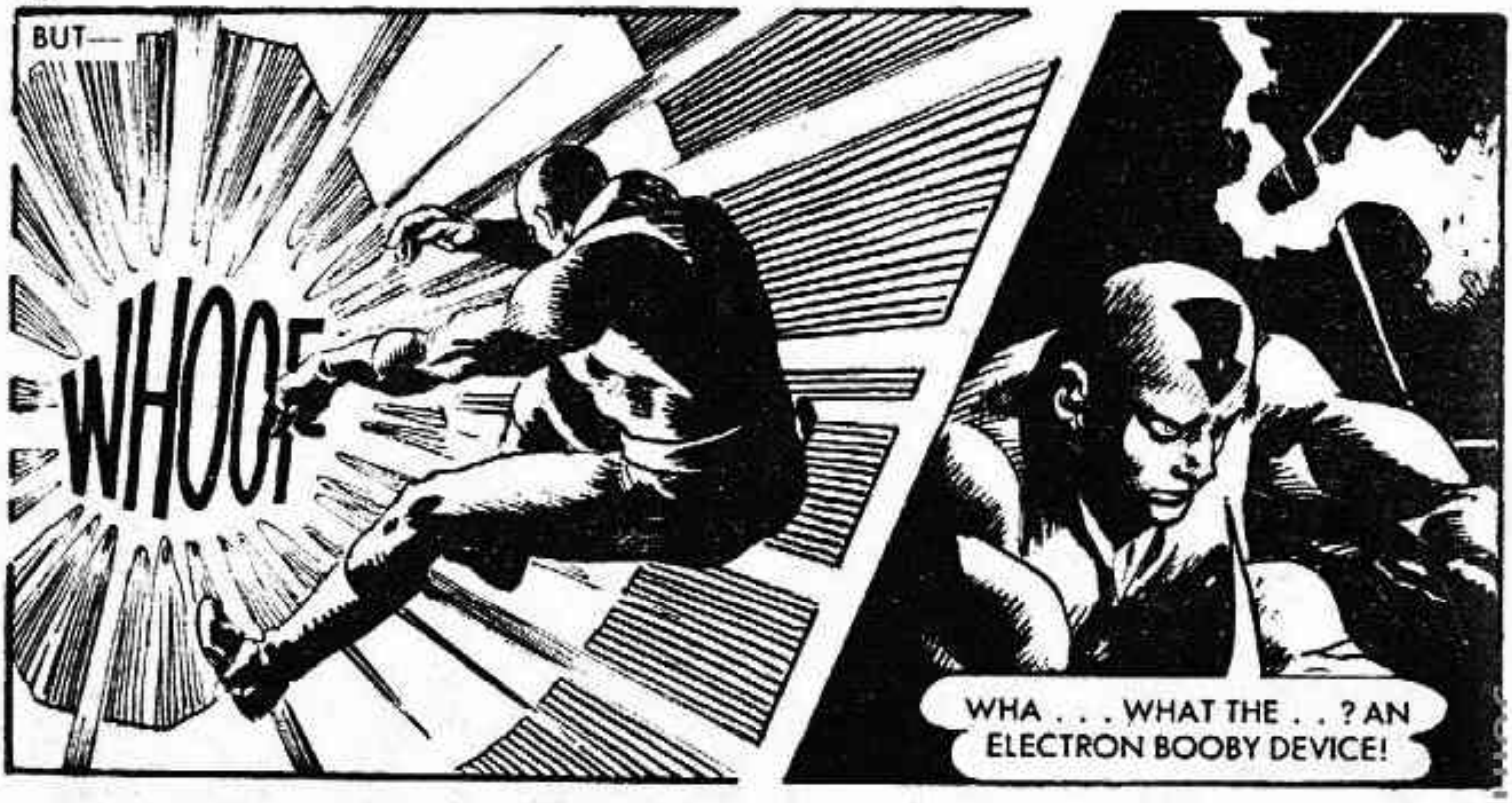
HE REELED HIMSELF FREE—
DESTROYING THOSE CRUSHER JAWS MEANS THAT I'VE GOT BIG CHUNKS OF ROCK TO DODGE.

BUT THE BREAKING OF THE CRUSHER JAWS HAD ALSO ALERTED THE SECURITY FORCES.
GOOD MORNING! I CAN'T SAY YOUR VISIT WAS A GREAT SURPRISE.

THE CLONE RANGER UNLOADED HIS STOCK OF GRENADES ON THE BLIND SIDE OF HIS CAPTORS.
WHERE TO?
PRISON!


THE CLONE RANGER WAS PUT IN A HOLDING UNIT WHILE THE GUARDS SOUGHT INSTRUCTIONS—
A SIMPLE TIME LOCK . . . THIS SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG.
FROM A PLACE OF CONCEALMENT HE PRODUCED A LASER BLADE—


THE LASER BLADE COULD BE USED FOR A NUMBER OF THINGS.
SIMPLE . . . A GENTLE PUSH. AND I'M FREE.


BUT—
WHOOF
WHA . . . WHAT THE . . ? AN ELECTRON BOOBY DEVICE!

BEFORE THE CLONE RANGER COULD DIGEST THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS DISCOVERY, THE GUARDS CAME FOR HIM.
OUT! IT'S EXECUTION TIME!
YOU FOOL! THE ANSWER TO YOUR PROBLEM HAS BEEN STARING YOU IN THE FACE — WHY DIDN'T I REALISE EARLIER?

DEATH WAS TO COME BY BEING SENT OUT ONTO THE SURFACE OF THE BARREN MOON WITHOUT A PRESSURE SUIT.
BEFORE I GO FOR MY WALK, WILL YOU ASK YOUR LEADER IF THE NUMBERS RA412800 TO RA412804 MEAN ANYTHING TO HIM.

HE WAS PUSHED INTO AN AIRLOCK AND IMMEDIATELY THE OXYGEN BEGAN TO DRAIN AWAY.
MY BODY SHELL CAN SURVIVE OXYGEN STARVATION, BUT ZERO PRESSURE WILL CAUSE MY FLUIDS TO EVAPORATE AND I WILL BE DESTROYED. IT MIGHT TAKE A FEW MINUTES, THOUGH.

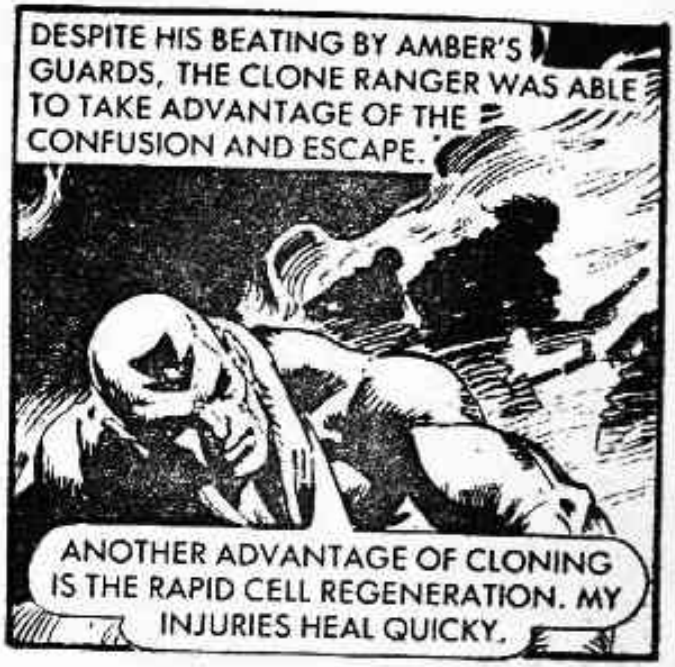
THE CLONE RANGER WAS DRAGGED BEFORE A FAMILIAR FIGURE—

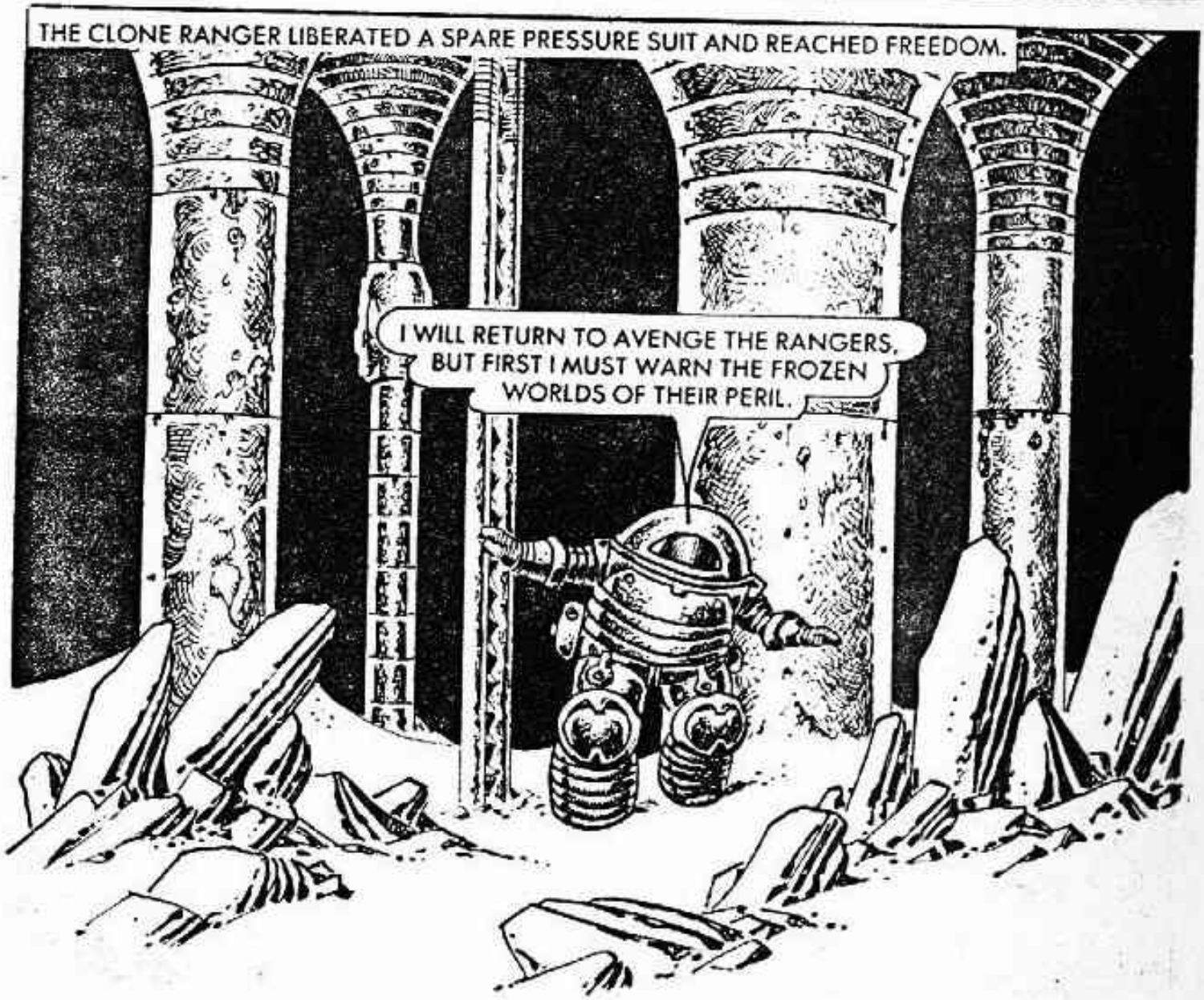
THE CLONE RANGER USED ALL HIS STRENGTH TO BREAK FREE.
YOU KILLED FIVE FRIENDS, BUT THANKS TO A GENETIC SCIENTIST, WE WERE ALL CLONED INTO ONE BODY SHELL — I AM THE CLONE RANGER. UNFORTUNATELY IT TOOK ME SOME TIME TO WORK OUT THAT I HAD A SKILL MISSING, YOURS . . . WHEN I FAILED TO OPEN THE CELL, BECAUSE I LACKED YOUR ELECTRONIC SPECIALITY, I KNEW YOU WERE THE TRAITOR.

WE ARE BACK FROM THE DEAD TO TAKE REVENGE FOR OUR BETRAYAL!
IT'S NOT HUMAN!
HE WAS EVENTUALLY CLUBBED INTO SUBMISSION.

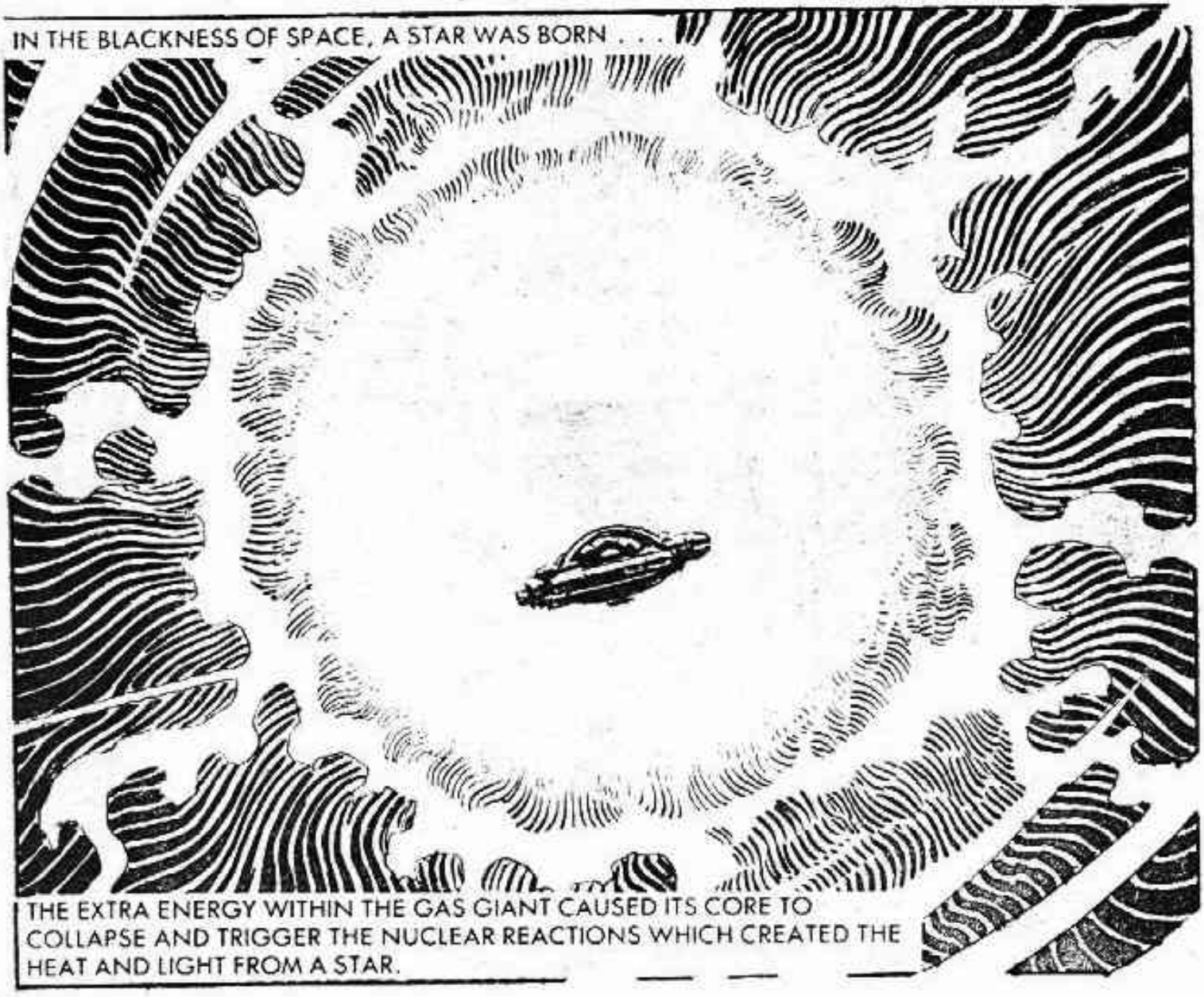
ALAS, CLONE RANGER, STILL CLINGING TO THE CODE OF HONOUR WHICH BINDS YOU TO DUTY AND EXPOSURE TO DEATH. OUR QUALITIES CAN BE EXPLOITED PROPERLY — VAST WEALTH IS IN OUR GRASP. WELL, MY GRASP, BECAUSE YOU'RE GOING TO DIE.
WITH THE MASS CONVERTER I WILL FEED SUFFICIENT ENERGY TO A NEARBY GAS PLANET TO TURN IT INTO A STAR.
THE NEW SOURCE OF HEAT AND LIGHT WILL TURN THE FROZEN OUTER PLANETS INTO LUSH WORLDS FOR WHICH PEOPLE WILL PAY WELL.

AMBER'S VISIONS OF POWER AND WEALTH WERE INTERRUPTED AS THE CLONE RANGER'S DISCARDED GRENADES WERE ACTIVATED BY THE PROCESSING SYSTEM.
BOOM!
WHAT'S HAPPENING?


DESPITE HIS BEATING BY AMBER'S GUARDS, THE CLONE RANGER WAS ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION AND ESCAPE.
ANOTHER ADVANTAGE OF CLONING IS THE RAPID CELL REGENERATION. MY INJURIES HEAL QUICKY.


THE CLONE RANGER LIBERATED A SPARE PRESSURE SUIT AND REACHED FREEDOM.
I WILL RETURN TO AVENGE THE RANGERS, BUT FIRST I MUST WARN THE FROZEN WORLDS OF THEIR PERIL.

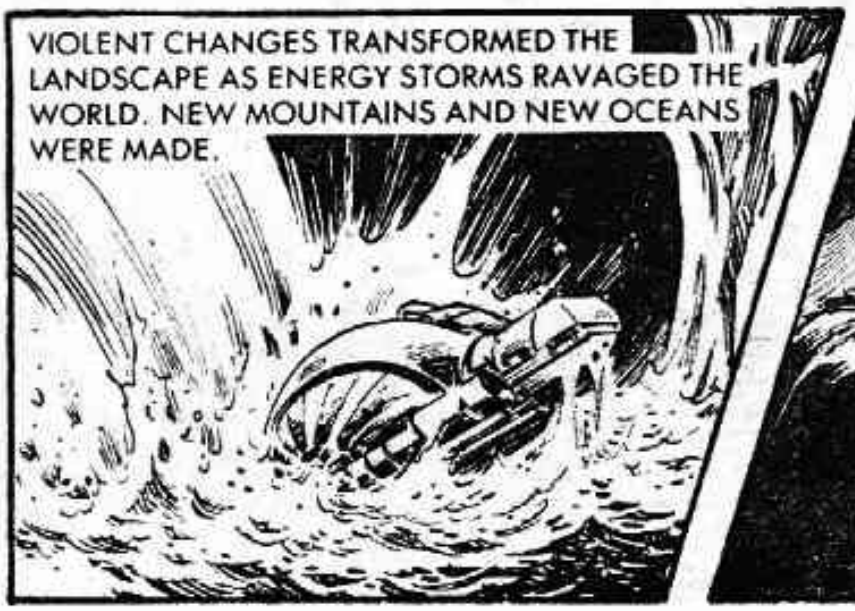
THE CLONE RANGER CALLED HIS CRAFT DOWN—
THAT SON OF EVIL, AMBER, WILL BE OUT TO KILL ME! MY ONLY CHANCE IS TO GET EVIDENCE TO HQ BEFORE HE GETS TO ME.
THE HUNTERS WERE DRIVING THE PEOPLE OF PAX ULTIMA ONTO THE PLAINS. THE HEAT FROM THE NEW STAR WILL MELT THE FROZEN WORLDS AND THE PAX WILL DROWN IN THE NEW FORMED OCEANS. I MUST GO THERE FIRST.


IN THE BLACKNESS OF SPACE, A STAR WAS BORN . . .
THE EXTRA ENERGY WITHIN THE GAS GIANT CAUSED ITS CORE TO COLLAPSE AND TRIGGER THE NUCLEAR REACTIONS WHICH CREATED THE HEAT AND LIGHT FROM A STAR.

THE CLONE RANGER USED MAXIMUM THRUST TO TRY TO REACH THE FROZEN PLANET AHEAD OF THE SHOCKWAVE OF ENERGY FROM THE NEW-BORN STAR.
IF THE PAX BURROW IN ON A HIGH GROUND THEY'VE A CHANCE OF SURVIVING.

HE REACHED PAX ULTIMA AS THE FIRST SIGNS OF A THAW APPEARED. THE CLONE RANGER'S WARNING WAS PASSED QUICKLY AND THEY TOOK REFUGE IN DEEP CAVES.
I NOW KNOW WHAT NOAH MUST HAVE FELT LIKE.

THE PLANET WAS BOMBARDED BY RAW ENERGY.

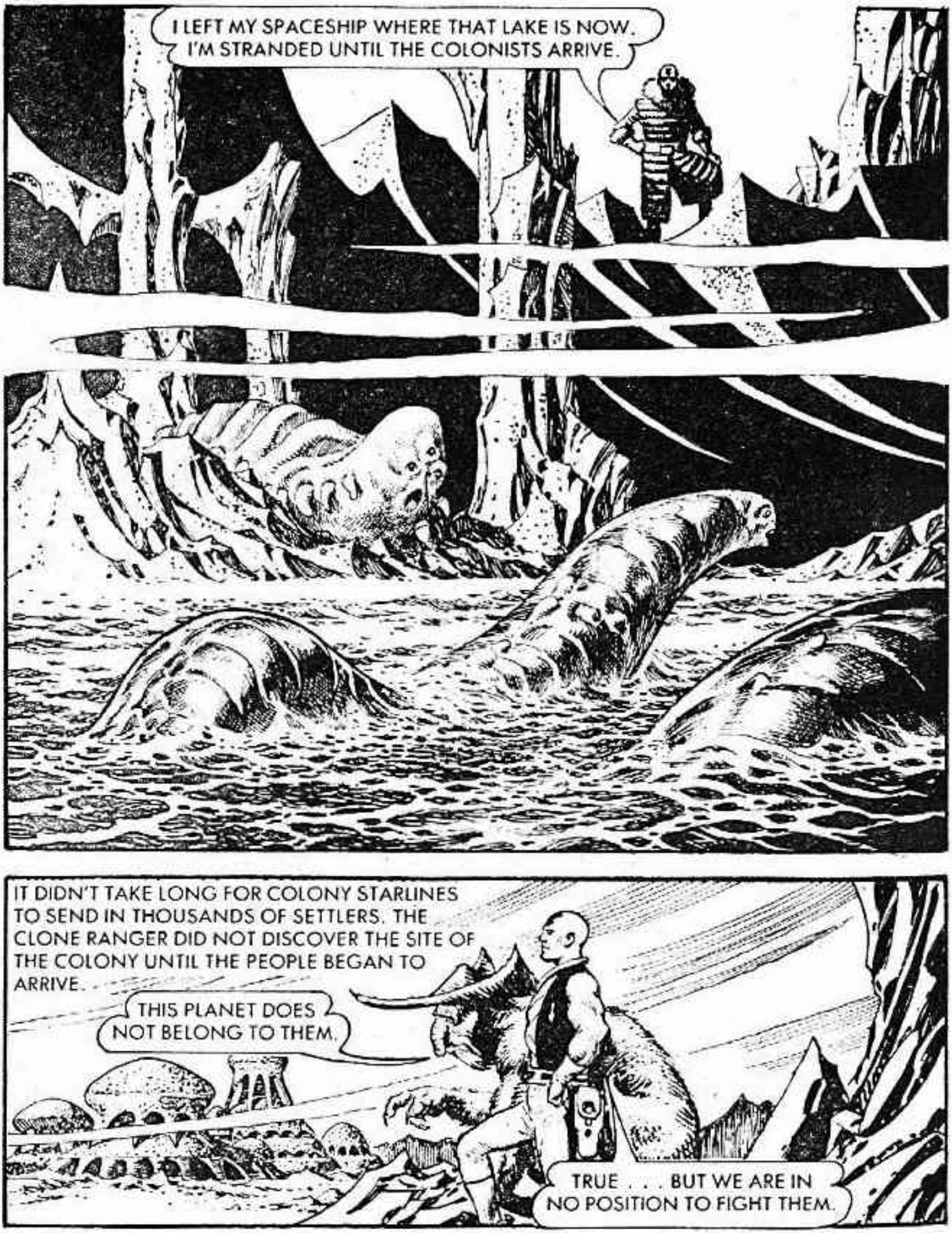

VIOLENT CHANGES TRANSFORMED THE LANDSCAPE AS ENERGY STORMS RAVAGED THE WORLD. NEW MOUNTAINS AND NEW OCEANS WERE MADE.

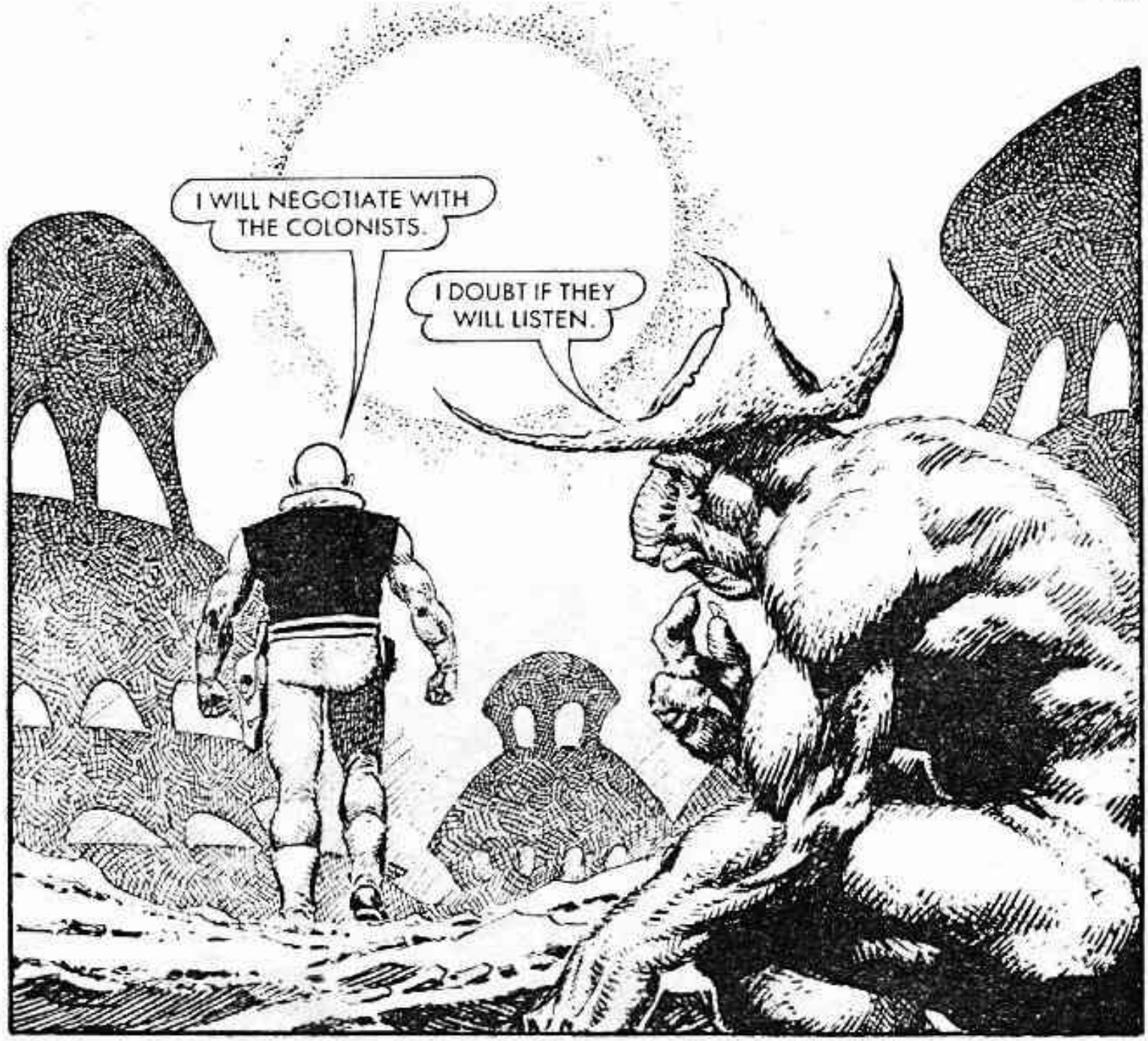
THE CLONE RANGER AND HIS FRIENDS FELT THE EARTH SHAKE AND HEARD THE CLAMOUR OF THE STORM. THEY WERE AFRAID, BUT THEY SURVIVED.

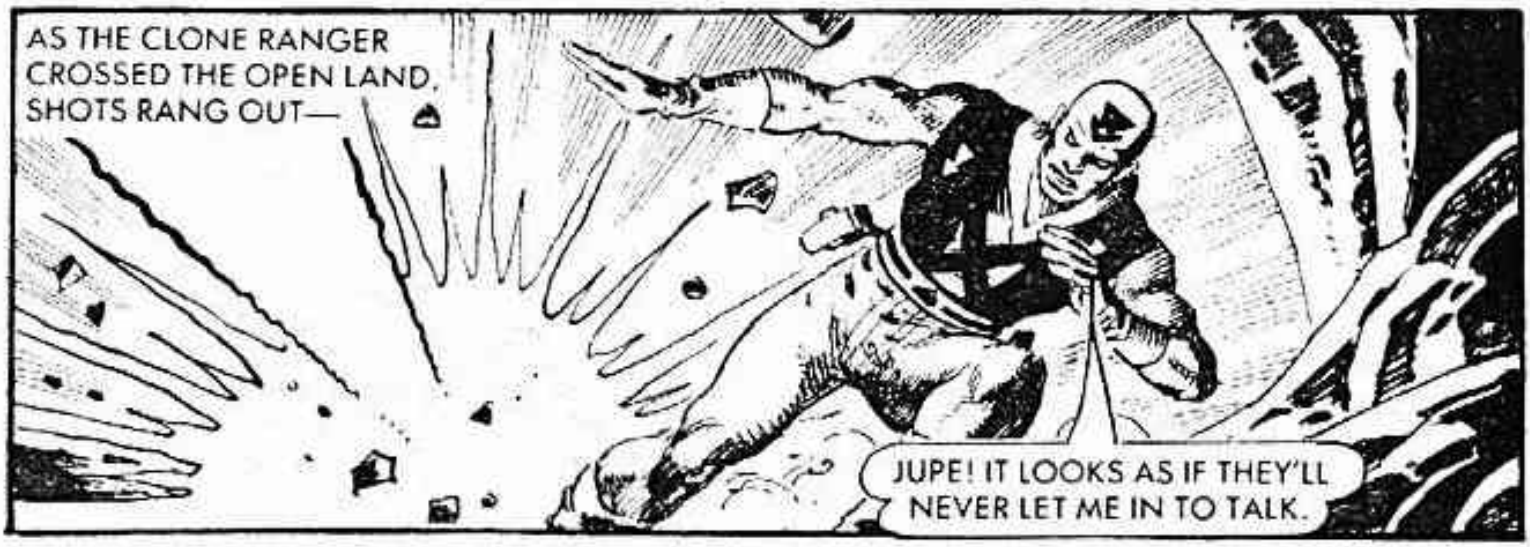
THE MELTING OF THE ICE UNCOVERED A CREATURE FROM THE DAWN AGE OF THE PLANET WHICH HAD SURVIVED IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION — PAX ORIGINALIA.

IT SLOWLY AWOKE, AND IT WAS HUNGRY—
YEOWLLLLLL!

AFTER MANY DAYS, WHEN THE FOOD STOCKS FINALLY BECAME EXHAUSTED, THE SURVIVORS RISKED VENTURING OUT OF THEIR REFUGE.
THE WORST IS OVER! IT'S HOT AND WET BUT THE EARTHQUAKES AND TIDAL WAVES HAVE STOPPED. WILL YOU SURVIVE?
WHY NOT? WE GREW HAIR TO KEEP WARM — WE CAN CUT IT TO REMAIN COOL.


I LEFT MY SPACESHIP WHERE THAT LAKE IS NOW. I'M STRANDED UNTIL THE COLONISTS ARRIVE.
IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR COLONY STARLINES TO SEND IN THOUSANDS OF SETTLERS. THE CLONE RANGER DID NOT DISCOVER THE SITE OF THE COLONY UNTIL THE PEOPLE BEGAN TO ARRIVE.
THIS PLANET DOES NOT BELONG TO THEM.
TRUE . . . BUT WE ARE IN NO POSITION TO FIGHT THEM.


I WILL NEGOTIATE WITH THE COLONISTS.
I DOUBT IF THEY WILL LISTEN.


AS THE CLONE RANGER CROSSED THE OPEN LAND, SHOTS RANG OUT—
JUPE! IT LOOKS AS IF THEY'LL NEVER LET ME IN TO TALK.

COME QUICKLY EARTH-FRIEND! WE HAVE DISCOVERED GREAT DANGER
BEAT IT, SCUM!
SO HAVE I!
THE PAX TOOK THE CLONE RANGER TO A FOOTPRINT—
THAT NIGHT DEATH WAS ABROAD IN THE COLONY—
IT IS THE MARK OF THE PAX ORIGINALIA — A BRANCH OF OUR FAMILY THAT DEVELOPED A TASTE FOR MEAT. THE ONLY MEAT HERE WAS US . . . SO THEY HUNTED US, BUT NOW YOU AND THE COLONISTS ARE HERE!
AAAAAAH!

THE BODY WAS RECOVERED, AND AMBER, WHO WAS IN CHARGE, SAW HIS CHANCE --
THIS IS THE WORK OF A SUB-HUMAN. A TRAINED KILLER, AND DANGER TO US ALL. HE WAS SIGHTED BY MY MEN, AND HE HAS ATTEMPTED TO KILL ME. HE CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO ROAM FREE.

AMBER SUCCEEDED IN WHIPPING UP HATRED AGAINST THE CLONE RANGER, AND A SEARCH PARTY SET OUT.
BRING THE KILLER IN ALIVE! HE'LL HAVE A FAIR TRIAL BEFORE WE EXECUTE HIM!

IT DIDN'T TAKE THEM LONG TO FIND THE CLONE RANGER—

DESPITE HIS SPEED, THE CLONE RANGER WAS CAUGHT.

AMBER MUST HAVE DONE A GOOD JOB OF BLACKENING MY CHARACTER.

A FARCE OF A TRIAL WAS ORGANISED, AND AMBER DULY HEARD THE VERDICT HE WANTED.
THE COURT FINDS YOU GUILTY OF THE MOST HORRIFIC MURDER AND ORDERS YOUR EXECUTION AT DAWN.
SCUM! NOT CONTENT WITH KILLING US ONCE, YOU WANT TO KILL US AGAIN — GIVE ME HALF A CHANCE, SLIME, AND I'LL TAKE YOU WITH ME.

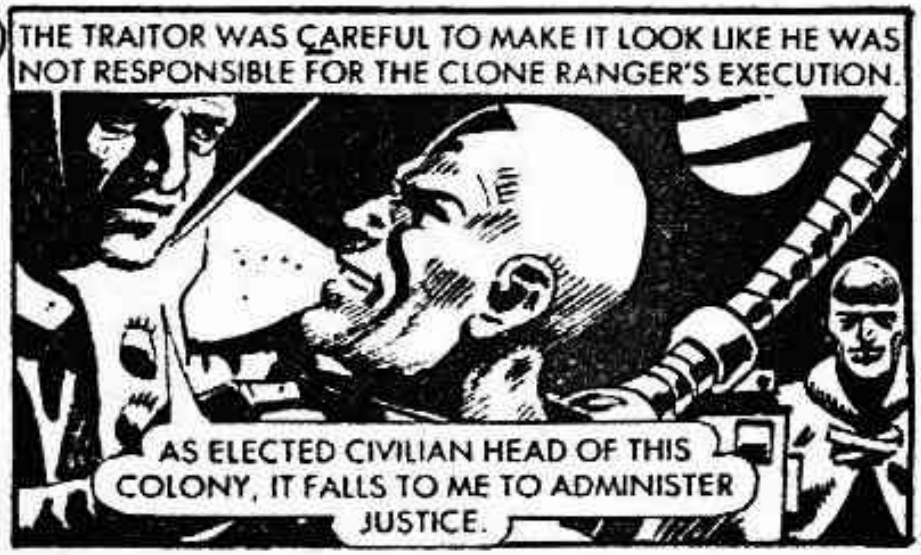
YOUR RAVINGS AND ACTIONS ENDORSE OUR JUDGEMENT OF YOU AS A COMPULSIVE KILLER. THIS WORLD WILL BE WELL RID OF YOU.

THAT NIGHT, THE CHAINS OF CAPTIVITY WERE TOO UNCOMFORTABLE TO ALLOW THE CLONE RANGER TO SLEEP, AND HIS RESTLESSNESS WAS DISTURBED BY AN EERIE WAIL.
AAOOW!
WHAT'S THAT NOISE? IT SOUNDED LIKE A SCREAM.
SHORTLY AFTERWARDS—
ANOTHER MUTILATED BODY HAS BEEN FOUND. SO WE'VE ADVANCED THE TIME OF THE EXECUTION.
GET THE SUB-HUMAN!

THE CLONE RANGER WAS DRAGGED OUT, AND ACCUSED OF ANOTHER KILLING.,

HOW COULD I KILL WHEN I WAS LOCKED UP?

HEY . . . AMBER, THAT'S A POINT!



THE PAX LEADER ARRIVED—
NOW, NOW, PEOPLE — JUST STOP WHAT YOU'RE DOING. ONE OF MY BROTHERS WAS KEEPING A WATCH ON YOUR "TRIAL". WE WOULD LIKE TO PRESENT SOME EVIDENCE.

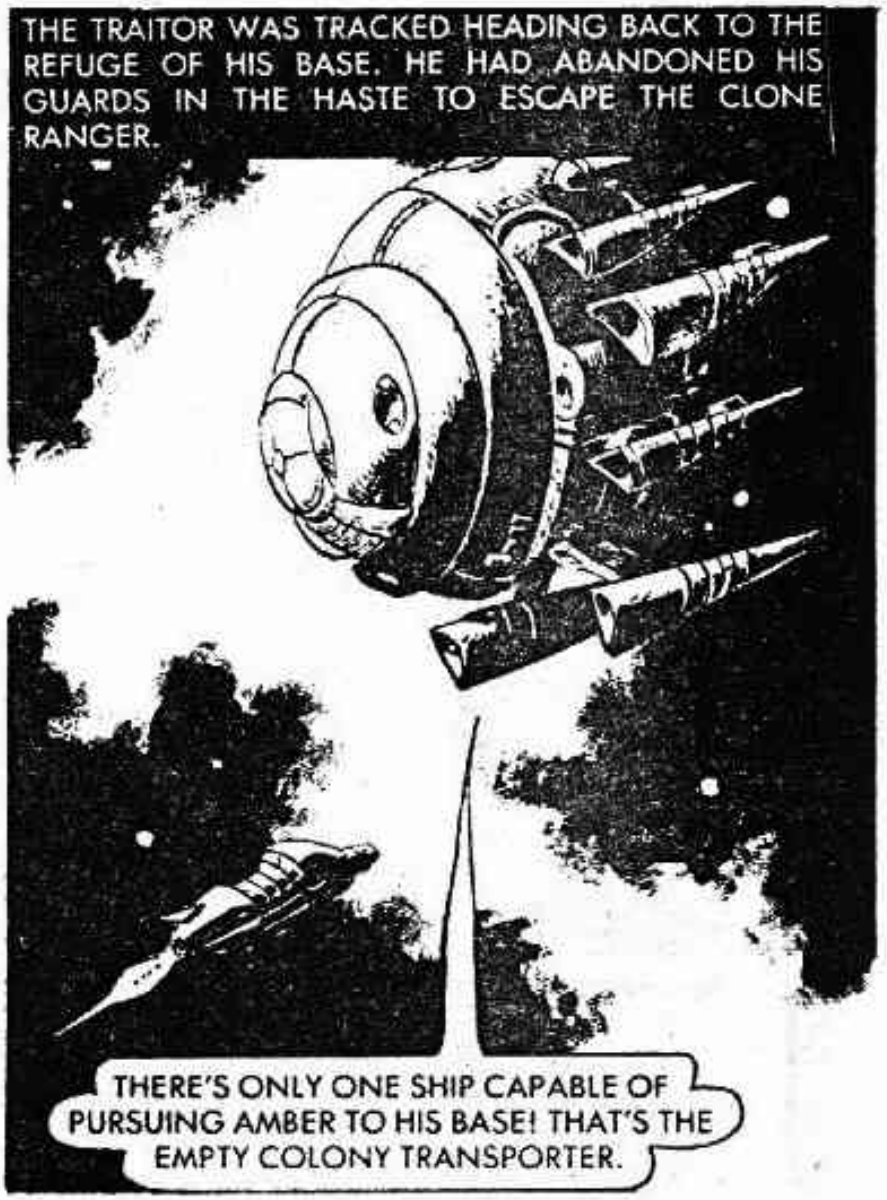
OTHER PAX BROUGHT IN A HUGE BEAST—
WHO IS THAT CREATURE? THERE'S BLOOD ON THAT THING'S JAWS.

HERE IS YOUR KILLER! PAX ORIGINALIA . . . A COMPULSIVE KILLER AND GENERALLY VICIOUS BRUTE.
I'D SAY THE JAW SHAPE MATCH THE MARKS ON THE BODIES. RELEASE HIM.

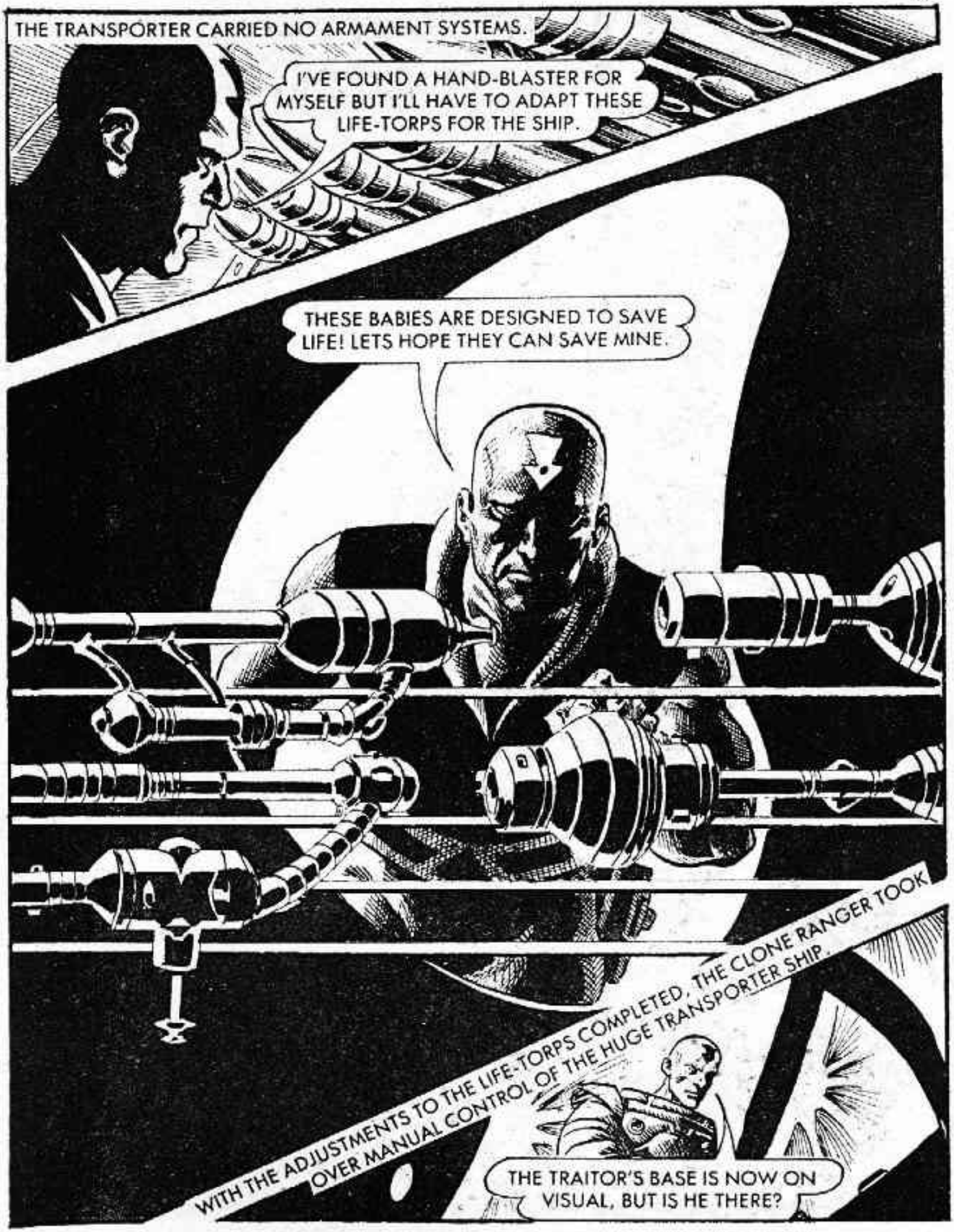
IT SEEMS WE OWE YOU AN APOLOGY.
NO, YOU OWE THE PAX AN APOLOGY FOR INVADING THEIR PLANET.

NOW WHERE'S THAT SCUMBAG, AMBER?
HE RAN OFF TOWARDS THE SPACEPORT WHEN THOSE CREATURES ARRIVED WITH THE BODY OF THE BEAST.

THE CLONE RANGER RAN FOR A CRAFT.
HE AND I HAVE SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS.


THE TRAITOR WAS TRACKED HEADING BACK TO THE REFUGE OF HIS BASE. HE HAD ABANDONED HIS GUARDS IN THE HASTE TO ESCAPE THE CLONE RANGER.
THERE'S ONLY ONE SHIP CAPABLE OF PURSUING AMBER TO HIS BASE! THAT'S THE EMPTY COLONY TRANSPORTER.

WITH THE AUTO-PILOT ONTO AMBER'S BASE, I'M FREE TO CHECK OUT THIS OLD HULK FOR WEAPONS.


THE TRANSPORTER CARRIED NO ARMAMENT SYSTEMS.
I'VE FOUND A HAND-BLASTER FOR MYSELF BUT I'LL HAVE TO ADAPT THESE LIFE-TORPS FOR THE SHIP.
THESE BABIES ARE DESIGNED TO SAVE LIFE! LETS HOPE THEY CAN SAVE MINE.
WITH THE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE LIFE-TORPS COMPLETED, THE CLONE RANGER TOOK OVER MANUAL CONTROL OF THE HUGE TRANSPORTER SHIP.
THE TRAITOR'S BASE IS NOW ON VISUAL, BUT IS HE THERE?

THE CLONE RANGER HAD CHOSEN HIS APPROACH PATH WITH CARE TO KEEP OUT OF REACH OF THE MASS-CONVERTER BEAM, BUT AMBER STILL HAD PLENTY OF ALTERNATIVES IN HIS ARSENAL.
THE CLONE RANGER IS MAD TRYING TO ATTACK ME IN AN UNARMED SHIP.
AMBER'S BASE HAD SURVIVED THE EXPLOSIVE CREATION OF THE STAR BY USING DIRECTIONAL JETS TO KEEP THE BASE ON THE DARKSIDE OF THE MOON.
IF THIS OLD HULK WILL HOLD TOGETHER FOR ANOTHER FRACTION OF A SPATIAL, I CAN LAUNCH MY COUNTER ATTACK.
AT A PRE-DETERMINED DISTANCE FROM HIS TARGET, THE CLONE RANGER LAUNCHED THE LIFE-TORPEDOES.
TORPS SAFELY AWAY, WHICH MEANS I CAN NOW EJECT FROM THE WRECK.

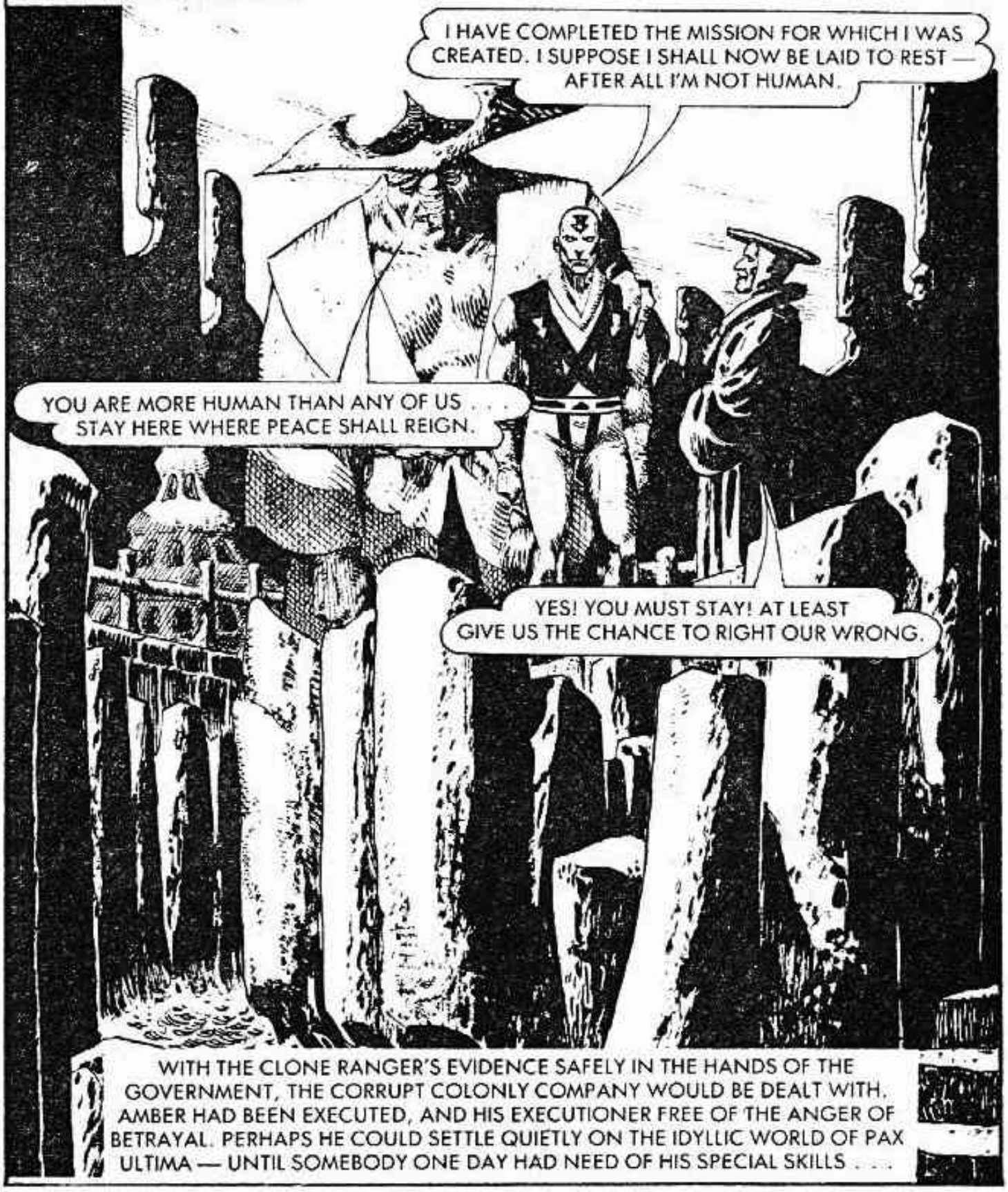
WHOOMPH!
NOT AN INSTANT TOO SOON!
THE CLONE RANGER HAD PRE-SET THE TORPEDOES TO CONVERGE ON THE TARGET AND PROGRAMMED THEIR DRIVE UNITS TO EXPLODE ON IMPACT. THE ATTACK WAS CRUDE BUT EFFECTIVE.
THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM TO INTERCEPT!
IN A SURVIVAL SUIT, THE CLONE RANGER PICKED HIS WAY THROUGH THE BASE'S RUINS.
IF AMBER SURVIVED THE BARRAGE ATTACK, HE WON'T SURVIVE ME!

YOU KNOW WHY I AM HERE, TRAITOR.

WHY DON'T WE BE PARTNERS! I STILL HAVE THE MASS-CONVERTER. WE COULD CREATE MORE NEW STARS, WE COULD BOTH BE WEALTHY, WHAT DO YOU SAY?

GOODBYE, SCUMBAG!
AAAA...AA
CLONE RANGER REPORTING MISSION ACCOMPLISHED. I HAVE THE SPACE CO-ORDINATES OF WHERE THE MASS-CONVERTER CAN BE RECLAIMED.
THE CLONE RANGER TRANSMITTED TO THE SECRET WEAPON RESEARCH LAB ON A SECURITY BEAM.
AMBER'S SPACESHIP HAD SURVIVED THE FIGHT, AND NOW CARRIED THE CLONE RANGER BACK TO THE COLONY PLANET.

ONCE BACK ON PAX ULTIMA—



WITH THE CLONE RANGER'S EVIDENCE SAFELY IN THE HANDS OF THE GOVERNMENT, THE CORRUPT COLONLY COMPANY WOULD BE DEALT WITH. AMBER HAD BEEN EXECUTED, AND HIS EXECUTIONER FREE OF THE ANGER OF BETRAYAL. PERHAPS HE COULD SETTLE QUIETLY ON THE IDYLLIC WORLD OF PAX ULTIMA — UNTIL SOMEBODY ONE DAY HAD NEED OF HIS SPECIAL SKILLS . . .

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